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Security is beefed up in eastern Jerusalem yesterday following the decision to go ahead with the Har Homa plan. (Brian Hendler)

## Yishai OKs Har Homa

By BAT SHEVA TSUR and ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

The permit to begin building on Har Homa was signed last night after the High Court of Justice postponed hearing a petition to prevent work at the site. The IDF and police have been put on alert around Jerusalem and other potential points of conflict along the Green Line, in case unrest breaks out in response. MKs Haim Oron (Meretz) and Avraham Poraz (Shinui) had submitted the petition earlier in the day asking for an interim injunction against the ministerial committee's decision to build 6,500 housing units for Jews on Jerusalem's Har Homa. The decision not to issue a restraining order was taken by the justice on duty, who decided the petition would be heard by three

justices within one month, together with two earlier petitions on the issue.

Immediately after consulting with Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai signed the permit to start building at the site. Rubinstein reportedly said there is no legal obstacle to signing the permit.

Palestinian factions plan strategy, Page 2

"I supported the plan for building at Har Homa since there is consensus about it, but I wanted first to study the plan thoroughly," Yishai said last night. "I heard expert opinions... and spent three

### Har Homa Decision

weeks looking it over." Building at the site is expected to begin within two weeks, he said.

The plan was presented to Yishai by Interior Minister Eli Shas, who was not allowed to sign it himself, because of a conflict of interest. Shas was involved in the original planning of the neighborhood. Oron and Poraz's petition said the Har Homa plan will discriminate against the Arab residents of East Jerusalem and constitute an infringement of the principle of equality. Of the 1,850 dunams that were appropriated at Har Homa, 20 were Arab-owned, the petition added. It warned that building

at the site could lead to violence. It is "mere lip service" to promise the Arab residents that they also will get homes there, because previous governments also have decided to build for Arabs and done nothing, the petitioners say.

"The law is intended to protect the basic rights of the minority as well as of the majority... and any infringement could lead to non-democratic actions by the minority or individuals, and even to violence," the petition states. Palestinian leaders have repeatedly warned against such a reaction, the petition continues.

As a precaution, the IDF has placed tanks and other heavy weapons on standby, should serious unrest break out in the territories following today's prayers.

Continued on Page 2

## Hanegbi, Deri, Lieberman said likely to be indicted

By BAT SHEVA TSUR and Jerusalem Post Staff

Police and the State Attorney's Office believe they have enough evidence to indict Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, MK Aryeh Deri and Prime Minister's Office Director-General Avigdor Lieberman, among others, but are still "far" from making a final decision on whether to do so.

According to individuals involved in the investigation, the probe continues to aim at fleshing out possible indictments or eliminating suspicions of criminal acts. It is estimated it will last at least another two weeks, with several individuals to be questioned again next week, some under caution.

Channel 1 said police investigators are leaning toward charging Hanegbi with breach of trust and fraud - which together carry a maximum sentence of six years in prison. Hanegbi said last night in reaction to the reports: "I am convinced there is no intention of presenting an indictment against me because of one sentence which I said in good faith at the cabinet session."

The investigation will continue to focus on two main lines of questioning: whether the passing of certain messages to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu constituted a political or criminal act, and whether the Bar-On appointment was arranged in a manner which could be interpreted as fraud or breach of trust.

Specifically, police are trying to determine whether Deri or Lieberman conspired to commit a crime and breach of trust regarding the appointment, sources said. They are also looking into possible blackmail charges related to messages and threats Deri may

have sent to Netanyahu via a third party regarding the appointment. Lieberman's possible role in passing the messages is also under investigation, but so far no evidence has been uncovered to indicate Netanyahu gave in to Deri.

Police also still do not have enough evidence to convincingly conclude there definitely was a "Bar-On-for-Hebron" deal, or to prove the suspicions raised by Channel 1 reporter Ayala Hasson alleging Bar-On promised Deri a plea bargain if he was appointed.

There is also still no proof that Deri and Shas made their support for the Hebron withdrawal conditional on Bar-On's appointment, the sources said.

Interior Minister Eli Shas and Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai, both of Shas, told police that Deri did not talk to them or tell them to vote in favor of Bar-On at the cabinet session where his appointment was approved.

### BAR-ON

A police spokesman said in response to reports on the investigation that it is not complete, findings have not been formulated, and that when the investigation is over they will be passed on to the State Attorney's Office as required.

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein and State Attorney Edna Arbel were swift to censure what they called police leaks.

Arbel, who is reportedly sick and resting at home, was in touch with Rubinstein as soon as it became clear that the various police reporters had all broken the story at five

o'clock. They pondered whether Police Investigations Division head Sandu Mazor was behind the leaks, Channel 1 reported.

For the second time this week, Rubinstein and Arbel then issued a joint statement against the police.

"It is too early to talk about the formulation of indictments," the statement said. "At this stage, the investigation is continuing and the material is being studied." But it added that the investigation was nearing its close.

The statement went so far as to contain an expression of regrets. "As was noted Sunday, it was agreed between the attorney-general and state attorney, and the police, that there would be no publication of details about the investigations," it read.

"If I had the name of the person responsible for the leak, I would deal with him as the minister in charge of police," Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani told Channel 1 last night. He said he would meet with the attorney-general and the state attorney on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Idm reported that coalition chairman MK Michael Eitan yesterday demanded that Kahalani investigate whether Cmdr. Sando Mazor, who is heading the probe into the Bar-On affair, is not himself guilty of breach of trust by virtue of his deeds or misdeeds surrounding the case.

Eitan said Kahalani had told the press he did not know who had given them false information regarding indictments. Eitan said he had received information indicating a clear suspicion that Mazor himself was the source of the story, and kept this from Kahalani.

## Arafat may ask Clinton to press Israel

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat is likely to appeal to President Bill Clinton at their White House meeting on Monday to press Israel to rescind its Har Homa decision, US officials said. To buttress his call, Arafat is likely to stress that it was his influ-

ence that has so far prevented a violent Palestinian reaction.

While the US pointedly rejects Israel's decision on Har Homa, at the same time officials doubt Israel will reverse its decision.

The US has already called for the Palestinians to exercise restraint and avoid violence, and this will be undoubtedly reiterated in the Clinton-Arafat meeting, as it was yesterday in a meeting between Arafat and US Consul-General in Jerusalem Edward Abington. Sources said Netanyahu reinforced his theme in his meeting with US Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk yesterday in Tel Aviv.

There are hints Netanyahu may have asked the US to veto a Security Council resolution on Har Homa next week, but this could not be confirmed. Officials doubt a Security Council resolution will be formulated by the time of Arafat's visit.

Sources said the prime minister phoned Arafat to notify him of the impending Har Homa decision before Wednesday's ministerial meeting was convened, but Arafat refused to take the call.

The Palestinians do not believe the government will build 3,000 Arab housing units in Jerusalem, Arab housing units in Jerusalem, as promised. Some recalled a Yitzhak Rabin's promise over a decade ago when he was defense minister, to watch the new hous-

## Holocaust survivors prominent on Swiss fund board

By MARILYN HENRY

BERN, Switzerland - Israel and Holocaust survivors will be prominently represented on the panel that will run the Holocaust humanitarian fund that was formally established by the Swiss government on Wednesday.

The fund, which is to be officially launched tomorrow, will be

\$Fr 100 million by the three major Swiss banks, is intended for all "needy" Nazi victims and their descendants. There have been no published criteria of need.

It is also not clear what portion of the fund is to go to Jewish victims. Other likely recipients are gypsies, homosexuals, and all others persecuted for political, religious, or racial reasons.

"All victims are victims," said Georg Krayner, head of the Swiss Bankers Association. No group has an exclusive right or claim to the fund, he said at a news conference Wednesday, adding that the Jews had suffered the most.

Krayner called on others to contribute to the fund, which he termed a good-will gesture of gratitude.

Jewish fighting over restitution payments, The Magazine

managed by an executive of seven members, according to the decree passed Wednesday by the Swiss Federal Council. Four members will be Swiss appointees of the council and three will be appointed by the World Jewish Restitution Organization. Of those three, one will be Israeli and one will represent survivors' organizations.

Efforts also will be made to ensure that haredi survivors, who are not represented by the fund, will not be overlooked by the fund, a high-ranking Swiss source said, noting that there had been complaints to Bern from several haredi groups.

The object of the fund, which was started with a contribution of

Continued on Page 14

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# Palestinian factions combine to plan protest strategy

By JON IMMANUEL

For the first time, all Palestinian political factions except Islamic Jihad met in Nablus yesterday, to open a three-day forum on national dialogue aimed at unifying Palestinian strategy during the upcoming permanent status negotiations.

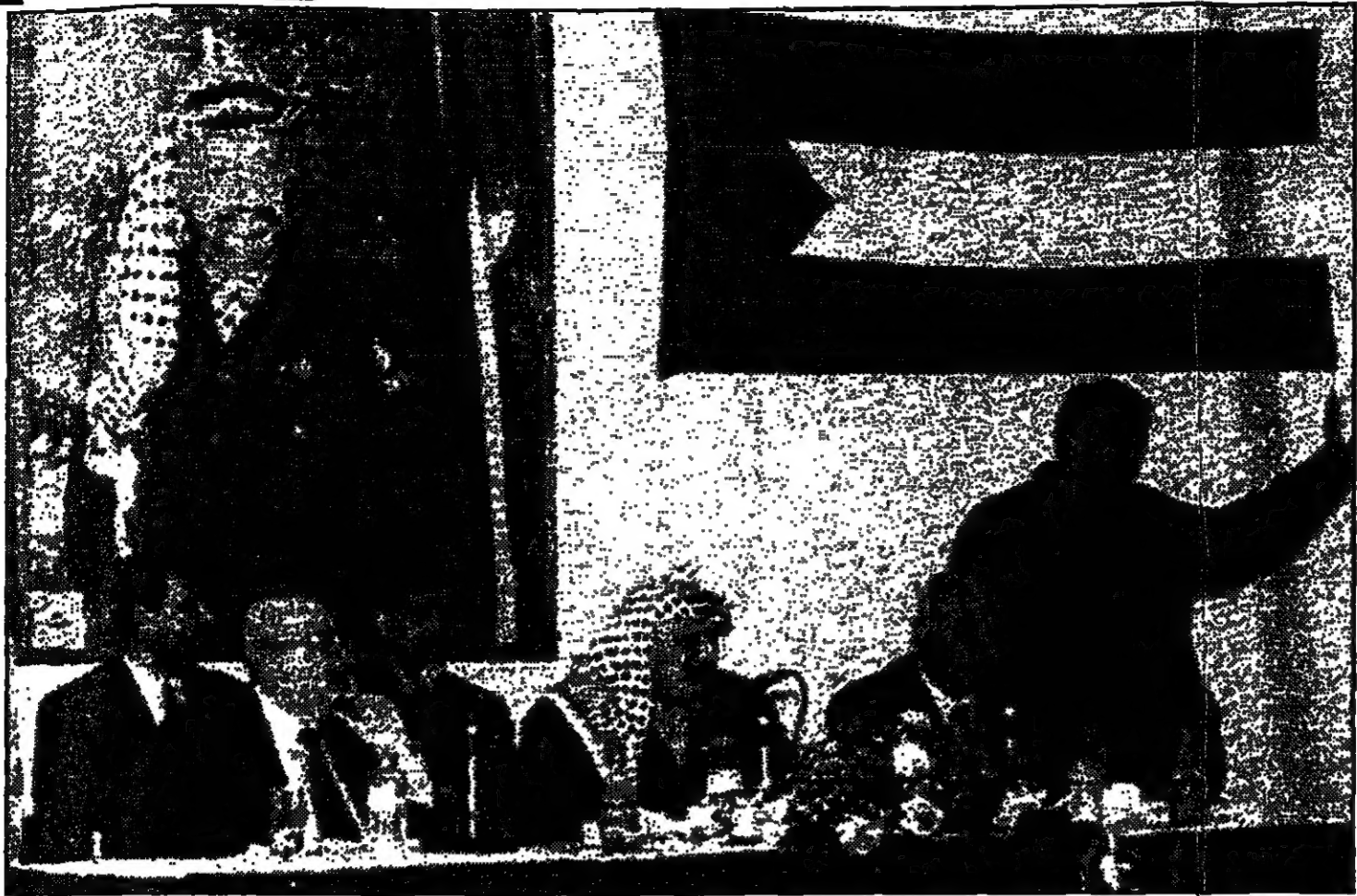
The conference was arranged two weeks ago, and was not a reaction to the government's decision to build on Har Homa. But the Har Homa decision was a shot in the arm for Palestinian unity.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat arrived by helicopter from Gaza in a grim mood. He opened the forum at the chamber of commerce building and warned that the government's decision is a "violation of all that has been agreed upon." He cited US and world opposition to the Har Homa project.

Hamas was represented at the conference by Dr. Mahmoud Zahar and Sayed Abu Musameh, both of whom have been arrested and jailed in past crackdowns by Arafat after Hamas suicide attacks on Israelis.

Hamas relayed a statement noting that the government decision mocked Palestinian feeling, coming "one day after the Israeli army killed and wounded Palestinian civilians in Hizme village and just as the Palestinian people were marking the painful anniversary of the massacre [February 25] in the Ibrahimiyeh Mosque."

Arafat is not counseling violent protests at this juncture, nor are other Palestinians, apparently preferring to work through the UN, Arab League, and other international and regional bodies to exploit his



Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat heads a forum on national dialogue, which began in Nablus last night. (Khaled Zigm)

diplomatic advantage. "We can only work reach an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital based on mutual understanding and

cooperation," he told the forum. Speakers noted that, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Palestinians not to be violent, he was himself guided in his decision to offend Palestinians based on the Israeli security services' assessment that the Palestinians would not be violent.

Hamas, working now within the Palestinian consensus, seemed willing to suspend violence temporarily, but wrote: "If Israel will implement building on Jabal Abu Ghneim [Har Homa], this will cause a violent cycle it will not be possible to stop."

The forum members decided to

convene the Palestinian Legislative Council tomorrow to discuss what actions should be taken to prevent what Arafat described as "plans to Judaize Jerusalem." An 11-member national dialogue committee was established headed by close Arafat aide PA secretary Tayeb Abdel-Rabeh. Six other members were to be selected by Arafat.

Several hundred Palestinians, many of them schoolchildren from Beit Sahur, marched yesterday to the IDF checkpoint near Har Homa yesterday to protest the planned new neighborhood there, carrying placards saying, "Jabal Abu Ghneim, Now and forever."

The placard mimicked the Israeli settlers' slogan, "Hebron now and forever." Another placard said, "Netanyahu is marching towards war. We are marching towards peace."

Salah Taamari, a Palestinian Council legislator from Bethlehem, addressed the crowd and shouted, "We will not allow the peace to fail." About 20 Israelis joined the marchers. The plan was to confront Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert when he arrived there, but the marchers were kept away by the troops.

Another march is scheduled for today from Umm Tuba.

# Olmert opposes any trade-off for Har Homa

By URIEL HELMAN

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, speaking against a backdrop of the future site of the controversial Har Homa neighborhood on the outskirts of Jerusalem, declared yesterday that, "Israel never made any secrets about our intention to keep this city united and to keep complete freedom for ourselves to determine when and how and where we develop the city."

Expressing opposition to any sort of trade-off with the Palestinians regarding land in Jerusalem for land in the West Bank, the mayor insisted, "I am definitely against making Jerusalem a captive of the process."

Although the issue of Jerusalem has yet to be resolved in final status talks with the Palestinians, Olmert proclaimed that, "Jerusalem is entirely outside of the context of whatever mutual concessions are made between us and the Palestinians in other areas."

He explained that the decision to build Har Homa was made within the context of the policies of the Israeli governments of the last 30 years, and warned the Palestinians that "any extreme, any unbalanced reaction may seriously upset the entire [peace] process."

Urging the Palestinian powers that be to oppose any type of violent opposition to the construction, Olmert pointed out that extreme reactions are not in the interests of any of the parties involved.

"I urge them, rather than divert their energies to protest against the building here, to cooperate with us in the effort we are making to improve quality of life in east Jerusalem," he said.

While the legal obstacles to the project are not expected to be overcome for another two weeks, the groundwork for 10 Arab neighborhoods in eastern

## Decision

Jerusalem, which Olmert described as part of a plan to improve the infrastructure and quality of life there, is expected to begin next week.

The plan, which includes construction of new roads, sidewalks, classrooms, and housing units, and improving sewage lines, is expected to cost NIS 300 million.

Olmert called both American and international criticism of the decision to go forth with construction "unacceptable" and "hypocritical," as he asserted Israel's right to "carry on this effort to build Jerusalem" as it saw fit.

Invoking the name of Yitzhak Rabin in support of the construction at Har Homa, the mayor claimed that the late prime minister initiated the plans to build the neighborhood. Rabin saw no contradiction between the project and the ongoing effort to achieve peace with the Palestinians, said Olmert.

"This is not a violation of the Oslo agreement," he insisted, asserting that construction at Har Homa is no different than the continued building of the Jerusalem neighborhoods of Gilo and East Talpiot on nearby hillsides.

A total of 6,500 housing units are planned on the 1,800 dunams of land that the government expropriated from property owners, 76% of them Jewish and 24% of them Arab.

The first phase of the plan, construction of approximately 2,400 units, has been approved by local and district committees, and is expected to receive ministerial approval within two weeks at which time construction may begin.

"There is no way this project will not be completed," proclaimed Olmert.



## CEREMONY UNCOVERING MEMORIAL PLAQUE FOR EGGED BUS LINE 18 VICTIMS

With the passing of a year since the terrorist attack on Egged bus line no. 18, the Municipality of Jerusalem will hold a ceremony uncovering the memorial plaque for the victims of the attack, with the participation of the mayor - MK Ehud Olmert.

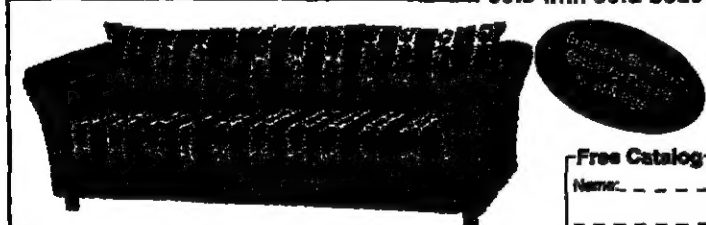
The ceremony will take place on Monday, 3 March 1997, at 15:00, near the Generali Building on Jaffa Street (at the corner of Shlomzion Hamalka).

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## HAR HOMA

Continued from Page 1

The army has been instructed to "use all means necessary" to quell any violence and has placed heavy troop concentrations around expected flare-up sites.

Military sources in the Central Command said units have curtailed their training and have been brought to Har Homa and other potential confrontation sites.

"We will do our best to avoid friction, but if the situation deteriorates then we won't hesitate using all force necessary to return public order," one IDF officer said.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai issued the stiff instructions to the IDF yesterday following a meeting with the "Territories Forum" in his office in Tel Aviv.

The forum included the deputy chief of staff, General Security Service head Ami Ayalon, OC Intelligence, OC Planning, the coordinator for activities in the territories, and top police commanders.

Mordechai has instructed the IDF to be prepared for all situations in order to "give decisive and

immediate answers for any events, alities." IDF officers and soldiers have been briefed on the lessons learned from the September riots. Accordingly, tanks have been readied for deployment around Palestinian-controlled cities.

In any case, military sources said mass eruptions of violence are not expected, partly due to Israel's open warning that it would not tolerate it, and also because it is not in the interests of the Palestinian leadership. The Palestinian Police is against violence, but it is unlikely that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat has specifically instructed his commanders to prevent violence. Still, Palestinian policemen running road-blocks are most likely to prevent mobs from approaching IDF troops at the roadblocks.

Though the IDF does not have any intelligence expectations regarding flare-ups today, it will be ready to deal with any unrest, one military source said.

Security sources said that while the use of guns against IDF troops is not expected, there is concern that Hamas may try to carry out a large-scale bombing or attack.

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## Israeli Arabs to discuss protests

By DAVID RUDGE

Israeli Arab council leaders are to meet in the Galilee tomorrow to decide on measures to protest the government's approval of plans to build housing on Har Homa.

This follows an outright condemnation of the government's decision by the forum of Arab Council Heads, which warned it could lead to violence and derail the peace process.

The forum is to meet in Kafr Manda, near Nazareth, amid growing calls from members of the Arab community to stage demonstrations, or even a general strike, in protest over the move.

The meeting was originally planned to discuss arrangements to commemorate the 21st anniversary of Land Day at the end of next month - the date when Israeli Arabs staged nationwide demonstrations against the expropriation of Arab-owned land.

The first Land Day demonstration, in 1976, was marred by riots in which six protesters were killed and dozens of people were injured,

including several members of the security forces, in violent clashes, mainly in the Galilee. Abed Ibitawi, director-general of the monitoring committee composed of Israeli Arab leaders, including politicians, said that the Har Homa issue would now be on the top of the agenda at the meeting.

"There are many suggestions for a general strike and demonstrations against the government's decision, which will be discussed at the meeting," said Ibitawi.

"We are deeply opposed to this decision, which we see as a threat and poison to the continuation of the peace talks with the Palestinians. It's a breach of all the Oslo Accords."

"Everybody in the Arab sector is very upset and concerned about this decision and they are all waiting for the meeting of the Arab Council Heads forum and the monitoring committee afterwards to decide how to respond," said Ibitawi, who is also spokesman for the Shfaram Municipality.

## Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the seven of spades, the queen of hearts, the ace of diamonds and the 9 of clubs.

In last night's weekly Payis Hazak drawing, the holder of tick-

et number 435842 won NIS 1 million, while ticket number 679669 was good for a new car.

Those holding tickets numbered 64242, 702302, 529164, 751859, 766656, 444683, 621906, and 48465 all won NIS 5,000.

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## Court: Amit not a workers' organization

By MICHAEL UDELMAN

The Amit organization is not a representative workers' organization, like the Histadrut, which can collect the organization tax deducted from workers' salaries and sign collective work agreements, the High Court of Justice ruled yesterday.

Overturning a ruling by the National Labor Court, which recognized Amit as a workers' organization in September 1995, the nine-judge panel ruled that Amit failed to prove it was an independent body and not dependent on the Maccabi Health Fund.

The court said that Amit had not held elections nor did it represent only salaried workers, as is required for a representative workers' organization. The court also noted that while the prime purpose of a labor organization is to represent workers, Amit is a profit-making body.

The Histadrut, which petitioned the High Court against Maccabi, will now demand that the Treasury and employers transfer the organization tax deducted from every worker's wages to the Histadrut.

Histadrut legal adviser Naomi Landau said the Histadrut does not object to additional workers' organizations, "but in this case we knew and proved to the court that Amit was a fictitious thing intended to attract people to the Maccabi health fund, under the guise of a workers' organization."

"Amit serves as a tax shelter to groups within organized work places. Its existence damaged the workers' ability to unite and fight together for their rights," said Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz.

"We discovered many working places in which Amit collected membership fees from the workers, without doing anything for them. They wanted to get money for the collective agreements and benefits which the Histadrut obtained for its members," Peretz said.

Amit officials, however, noted that the court said the organization can continue operating and even expand its activities, in keeping with the freedom to organize, and serve its members as it sees fit.

But they admitted that it would now cost members twice as much to belong, since the group can no longer collect the organization tax.

Amit Chairman Dan Selinger said almost all Amit's members are salaried workers and there is no connection between the organization and Maccabi.

"I don't understand how, in a democratic state, the will of 185,000 workers can be ignored," he said.

David Rudge adds: Baruch Zaltz, head of the Histadrut's Haifa district, yesterday called on the 500 Kiryat Motzkin municipal workers, who recently left the Histadrut to join Amit, to return to the fold.

The municipal workers twice broke ranks with the labor federation by refusing to take part in a nationwide strike called by the Histadrut last summer, and later in another organized stoppage in solidarity with workers at the Haifa Chemicals factory.

The works committee decided last month to leave the Histadrut after a lengthy financial dispute with the labor federation.



Levy meets with Japanese prime minister

Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto (left) receives Foreign Minister David Levy prior to the start of talks yesterday in Tokyo. During his five-day visit to Japan, which gave the third largest contribution to the Palestinian Authority, Levy is briefing top officials on the peace negotiations. Levy was also received by the emperor yesterday. (Reuters)

## Nazi gold panel mulls proposal to create fund for survivors

BRUSSELS (AP) — A committee of American, British, and French officials yesterday debated a request from Jewish groups to create a fund for Holocaust survivors from 5.5 tons of Nazi gold held by the three nations.

Members of the Tripartite Gold Commission held their first meeting since new allegations surfaced that the bullion includes gold plundered from death-camp victims.

Officials from the three-nation panel said they must await instructions from their governments before deciding on the proposal to donate the gold to survivors.

"It's going to be a decision made in the capitals," said Terry

Breese, the panel's American member.

Commission officials said investigations into the origins of the gold, which is stored at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York and the Bank of England in London, could take another month. The panel agreed to meet again March 20.

The proposal to create a fund for Nazi victims was put forward by Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Restitution Organization, in New York.

On Wednesday, Switzerland agreed to set up a \$71 million fund for Holocaust victims, after Jewish groups accused the government of profiting from Nazi gold stolen from Jews and from

occupied countries.

Jewish groups say Switzerland is still holding up to \$7 billion belonging to Jews who put their money there for safekeeping during the war, but perished under the Nazis.

The Tripartite Commission, founded in 1946, has returned more than 300 tons of gold stolen by the Nazis during World War II to various central banks across Europe.

The countries that have received gold from the commission are Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Poland, Greece, Austria, Albania, Italy, the former Czechoslovakia, and the former Yugoslavia.

## NEWS

in brief

### Ivry inquiry summons air force chief

The Ivry board of inquiry investigating the February 4 collision of two air force CH-53 transport helicopters in which 73 soldiers died has summoned OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliyahu to testify at the beginning of next week.

The commission, which is now focusing on regulations and overall safety precautions, is expected to hand in its final report and recommendations in about three weeks. It is expected that some officers will be dismissed. Some air force officers, particularly the Yasur squadron commander and the commander of Tel Nof Air Base where the heavy transport squadrons are located, have reportedly sought legal counsel. *Arish O'Sullivan*

### Mordechai to Jordan on March 11

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who was forced to cancel his visit to Jordan this week due to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's sudden trip, has rescheduled it for March 11. King Hussein telephoned Mordechai at his home earlier this week and asked him to come to the Hashemite kingdom as soon as he is able, "because there is a lot to talk about." *Arish O'Sullivan*

### Lieberman unlikely to be indicted over reports

Police have recommended ending the probe of Prime Minister's Office Director-General Avigdor Lieberman on suspicion he gave the cabinet misleading summaries of reports on the performance of the Israel Broadcasting Authority. The case is being passed to the state attorney, who will make a final decision. But investigators said they have enough evidence to indict Yaron Zilka, the Lieberman aide who prepared summaries of reports by the IBA comptroller and an outside consulting firm, which contained negative references missing from the originals. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

## Friedman committed to psychiatric hospital

News agencies

The Jaffa Military Court ruled yesterday that Noam Friedman, the soldier who shot and wounded seven Palestinians in Hebron on January 1, be treated in a psychiatric hospital and not imprisoned, the IDF Spokesman said.

Friedman told the court he shot into a crowd of Arabs in the Hebron casbah on January 1 to prevent Israel from handing over most of the town to the Palestinian Authority. Friedman also said he wanted to avenge the death of Baruch Goldstein.

The court based its decision on

the recommendation of an IDF-appointed committee of psychiatrists which evaluated Friedman's mental state. The panel said he is schizophrenic and recommended he be hospitalized. The IDF Spokesman said the court ordered him released from detention and sent to a psychiatric hospital.

The IDF is still probing how and why Friedman — with a history of mental disorders — was drafted. Knesset State Control Committee Chairman Ran Cohen (Meretz) called on the defense minister to institute a better mental evaluation of potential recruits and establish criteria for drafting extremists.

## Netanyahu feels bond with Turkey against 'extremist elements'

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said after meeting with Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Ismail Karadayi yesterday that the two countries have an interest in cooperating against "extremist elements."

Karadayi, on a three-day visit here, met with Netanyahu at his office, along with Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and the prime minister's military secretary, according to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office.

"We appreciate Turkey and its army and I believe our coopera-

tion is a very important component in securing the aspiration for peace and stability in the Middle East, an area that has many extremist elements," the statement quotes Netanyahu as saying. "Turkey and Israel have a joint interest in securing stability, peace and moderation in our region."

The statement quoted Karadayi as thanking Netanyahu for the meeting and saying: "The relations between Turkey and Israel have always been good and will be even better in the future."

"There are excellent relations between our armies and our military industries and this visit left me with a very good impression."

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The American Friends of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem  
 Invitation to Submit Offers for The Purchase of a House in Jerusalem

1. The American Friends of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (hereunder, the American Friends) invites offers for the purchase of a house, situated at 12 Rehov Pinsker, Jerusalem (near the Jerusalem Theater) built on a plot of 751 sq.m. The property (hereunder, the house) is registered in the Jerusalem Land Registry, in Book 1015, Page 7098 (identified also by the reference, 30021/113), and is registered at the Israel Lands Administration office as Parcel 5, Block 30021.

2. Those interested must purchase the relevant documents at the offices of the attorneys of the American Friends, Ze'ev Pilpel-Paz and Zvi Gutzeit, 8 Gezer street, Tel Aviv, Tel. 03-5239280, the cost being NIS 100 (one hundred New Israel Shekels).

3. The documents must be completed and submitted by March 31, 1997, at 1 p.m. at the above offices, with an unconditional bank guarantee or a bank check for an amount equal to 5% of the offer.

4. It is the bidder's responsibility to check the physical condition of the house, the purposes for which it may be used, the practical utilization possibilities, the associated building and other rights, the ownership rights, and leasing and subleasing rights, etc., at the appropriate government and/or municipal or other offices.

5. This invitation to purchase the property does not constitute a tender, and the laws applying to tenders will not apply. Nor does it create any obligations or responsibilities towards those submitting offers, or give them any special status.

6. The American Friends and the undersigned are under no obligation to accept the highest or any offer, and they retain the right to negotiate with any of the parties that submit offers, and to hold an auction among them. They also retain the right to invite parties, from among those who submit offers, at their sole discretion, to participate competitively for the purchase of the house, or to sell the house in any manner they deem correct, at any time, or not to sell the house - all at their sole discretion.

7. If any offer is accepted, the American Friends or their attorneys will advise the party concerned by registered mail.

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The American Friends of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem  
 Represented by Ze'ev Pilpel-Paz, Attorney at law.



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## Strength in numbers

For the first time in Israel's history, the Committee of Ministers for Aliya, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs, chaired by Industry and Trade Minister Nathan Sharansky, met this week with diaspora leaders and decided to prepare a joint agenda to address problems facing the Jewish people. Seven ministers attended, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who rightly pointed to the problem that dwarfs the daily disputes which dominate Israel-diaspora relations: The dwindling size of the Jewish people.

The Jewish people, in the words of a 1996 report by the World Jewish Congress, "has never [demographically] recovered from the Holocaust and is far from attaining its pre-war numerical strength of 18 million."

In fact, diaspora Jewry has shrunk from over 10 million people in 1945 to about 8,450,000 by the end of last year. During the same period, the Jewish population of Israel rose from 565,000 to 4,650,000.

These opposing demographic trends in Israel and the diaspora will mean, according to one estimate, that by 2020 Israel will be home to a majority of the Jewish people. This trend may seem to signal a victory for Zionism, but could in fact simply mean that Jewish population growth, particularly in the diaspora, will have dropped drastically.

Antisemitic conspiracies claiming Jewish control of the world aside, Jews have long taken for granted a disproportionate influence on culture, science, commerce and government. Jews have also become used to the idea that numbers do not matter. After all, the world's 13 million Jews seem to be holding their own among the world's almost two billion Christians, one billion Moslems, and one billion Hindus and Buddhists. But there is a limit to this small-is-beautiful mentality.

Jews currently comprise about one-quarter of one percent of the world's population. The more important figure, however, is Jewish population in proportion to the civilizations of which Jews have been a part. Two thousand years ago, for example, the world's 8 million Jews were roughly 10 percent of the Roman Empire. Since then, the proportion of Jews within the culture surrounding them has dropped dramatically, but was probably never below one percent.

In the coming century, demographers estimate that world population will double, to about 10 billion people. But the pool of educated people who participate in global culture will multiply many times, to around 8 billion people.

If Jews are to be just 1 percent of the "united" people of this future world, it means there must be about 80 million Jews.

But if current low birth rates and rates of intermarriage and assimilation persist, this figure seems like no more than a pipe dream.

To some Israelis, this picture of a diaspora that has shriveled to a shadow of itself, and an Israel that is just another small country, may not seem

to be such a bad thing. It is natural for there to be some yearning to be a "normal" country, and to jettison the moral baggage of striving to become "a light unto the nations." It is dangerous, however, to believe that Israel can survive in the long term as a demoralized remnant of the Jewish people.

In any case, most Israelis, if you scratch them deeply enough, would admit to believing that the ambition of a Jewish state should be more than mere survival, but to be a positive influence on the world, and the spiritual center of a burgeoning Jewish people. For that to happen, revolutionary thinking is needed to reverse the current demographic decline.

Currently, diaspora Jewish leadership has rightly focused on stemming the rapid hemorrhaging from Jewish ranks through assimilation and intermarriage. There is certainly much to be done to make Jewish day schools more attractive and accessible, and increasing the connection to Israel by encouraging the majority who have never been here to visit. But there is a whole other side of the equation that the Jewish people can no longer ignore in the face of the looming demographic decline: Conversion.

There is only so much that can be done to stem the outflow of Jews, and it is not realistic to expect most of the Jewish world to emulate the birth rate of the haredi minority. On the other hand, there is large, and largely untapped, potential of people who would sincerely wish to join the Jewish people if they felt they were welcome, particularly non-Jewish immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union and the Falash Mura.

Most Jews "know" that Judaism does not proselytize, and are even proud of the aura of exclusivity that small numbers can imply. The fact is that for a good chunk of Jewish history proselytizing was encouraged, and the thrust of the Jewish sources is positive towards conversion and converts.

The current Jewish distaste for conversion is clearly a product of the fact that since the Byzantine period and until this century, Jewish proselytizing would have resulted in severe punishment—in many places and times, a death sentence. It is understandable that, over time, Jews made a virtue out of necessity and chose to emphasize requirements that make conversion more difficult. But now the threat to the Jewish people is not regimes that would prohibit conversion, but the opposite—the welcoming arms of modern democratic society.

The one incident that marred the meeting chaired by Sharansky was when Interior Minister Eli Shais (Shas) walked out, rather than vote on the same committee with a representative of the Reform movement.

There are many fights between the Orthodox establishment and non-Orthodox Jewry—but among the greatest is over differing standards for conversion. The immediate challenge for both camps is to put Jewish unity first and hammer out standards for conversion that all will recognize.

DAMNED  
IF YOU DO

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ABRAHAM ROTHEN

## Timing is the name of this game

MOSHE ZAK

On January 15 the cabinet decided to honor the Labor government's commitment to the Oslo Accords, though it didn't say it in so many words. It authorized the agreement with the Palestinian Authority on redeploying in Hebron, and on the three-stage IDF withdrawal from parts of Judea and Samaria.

Five days earlier, on January 10, the government decided to appoint lawyer Roni Bar-On as attorney-general, setting in motion a government crisis that is still unfolding.

Both these actions were half-baked ones, casting a very poor light on the government's decision-making abilities.

Regarding the Bar-On appointment, Prime Minister Netanyahu pressed his cabinet for an immediate decision, giving the ministers no time to learn more about the candidate. Regarding the Hebron agreement, Netanyahu's eagerness to close the deal with Arafat blinded him to other possibilities on equally vital and sensitive issues.

Had the government made it crystal-clear that it was signing the Hebron agreement on the principle of honoring the previous government's decisions, it could have included on that basis simultaneous authorization of building on Har Homa. After all, the Labor government favored the project. But Netanyahu's people were so

keen to present the Hebron redeployment as better than the Oslo agreement that they blurred this central principle, thus missing their chance to push the Har Homa issue through at an opportune time.

It is far from certain that the Palestinians would have gone along with the decision to build on Har Homa. But it is equally cer-

during the final status negotiations. This was a classic case of more haste, less sophistication.

ONCE bitten, twice shy. After its sufferings over the attorney-general affair, the government showed too much caution over Har Homa. The damage already done to its image increased its

**The government was wrong to delay its decision on Har Homa till 40 days after the Hebron agreement**

tain that, at a time when every capital in the world was applauding the government for agreeing to additional withdrawals in Judea and Samaria, the Palestinians wouldn't have threatened renewed violence, and the tension that we are now feeling would not have come about.

Despite their claims to the contrary, the Palestinians have no right to interfere on Har Homa. Oslo granted them no status in Jerusalem. There was certainly no Israeli commitment to freeze development in the capital. All the agreement states is that they can raise the question of Jerusalem

hesitancy to announce construction.

This hesitancy didn't go unnoticed abroad, and the Palestinians, encouraged, began their chorus of violent threats against Israel.

During the Hebron negotiations, Israel laid great stress on its demand that the Palestinians repeal the anti-Israel clauses in their covenant; and Benjamin Netanyahu declared his satisfaction with Yasser Arafat's promise that the process of revising the covenant would be speeded up.

But this promise turned out to be worth about as much as all Arafat's earlier promises on the

subject. Had the government focused more on its vital objectives and been less concerned with press releases, it would have been aware of the possibility of Palestinian threats erupting over Har Homa. Netanyahu would have been putting his time to better use considering this than flogging the horse of the Palestinian Covenant.

At the same time, the Palestinians will probably be in no hurry to actually organize violence, since they would be risking their gains in the Hebron agreement. In any case, Israel will not give in to violence. It will not cede its right to build on its own sovereign territory.

Unfortunately, however, often there is no logic behind flare-ups. If the Palestinian mobs begin to riot and our leaders show signs of weakness and hesitation, they will lose control of developments, and it won't be just on Har Homa.

The real danger to Israel lies in the political sphere. If there is a conflagration, "the whole world" will try to do it, and the price will be more Israeli concessions.

That is why we must remain firm and make sure that if there is a flare-up, we are the ones to extinguish it—and right away.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

## They shouldn't have called the cops

ALLAN E. SHAPIRO

The police have no business being involved in the Bar-On affair.

It is not an issue of possible abuse by the police of their authority. Rather, it is a question of the abuse of the police, by imposing on them functions they are unsuited to perform.

What are they looking for? It is doubtful that they know themselves. This week they questioned an Israel Radio reporter about a story he broadcast on the possible opposition of Shas to the Hebron agreement.

Evidently they are trying to ascertain if there was a deal involving the appointment of Roni Bar-On. Suppose they find one. So what?

The police, like the courts, deal with rules. Coalition governments rule by deals.

When the Bar-On affair broke, Benjamin Netanyahu clearly lost his cool. But the panic call for a police investigation was a clever survival device.

Netanyahu knew that he had nothing to fear as far as the legality of the Bar-On appointment was concerned. By putting the spotlight on a police investigation, the prime minister took the heat off the issue on which he is vulnerable—playing coalition politics with the appointment of the attorney-general.

Resorting to the instrumentalities of criminal justice has the effect of immobilizing ordinary methods of civil control. The political opposition is constrained

to await the outcome of the investigation, and Knesset criticism is neutralized.

The likely conclusion is that the police will conclude that no law was violated—which wasn't the issue in the first place—and Netanyahu will declare that he has been vindicated.

A police investigation is not a means of achieving a civic cul-

ture, but an admission that the civic culture has failed. Then norms of behavior have no meaning, unless they are backed by a criminal sanction.

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, for example, may have deceived his cabinet colleagues regarding the opinion of outgoing attorney-general Ben-Yair on the Bar-On appointment, and may have misled them regarding Supreme Court President Aharon Barak's. This week the police questioned Barak a second time, presumably to determine if Hanegbi was guilty of breach of a fiduciary duty.

Suppose he wasn't. Suppose he was only misrepresenting the facts or telling half-truths, without sinking to the level of a breach of trust that "injures the public," in the language of the relevant provision of the penal code.

Suppose he was not over Profumo's adultery, but over his violation of the trust of his colleagues and of the House of Commons.

Profumo's ministerial career was at an end. Hanegbi's is alive and kicking. A shake of the hands with the prime minister, and that's it.

Netanyahu has declared his complete confidence in the justice minister. The facts, of course, haven't changed—just the norms of acceptable political conduct.

The new law for direct election of the prime minister deals with the issue of criminal charges against the prime minister. Its provisions are designed to protect the premier, by providing that a criminal investigation of him requires the agreement of the attorney-gen-

eral, and only the attorney-general can press criminal charges against him.

No thought appears to have been given to the possibility of manipulative use of the investigatory process to sanitize dirty politics.

A political actor who violates the norms of conduct in the public arena doesn't necessarily have to go to jail. But he should have to quit.

Perhaps the worst part about calling the cops is that it lets the rest of us off the hook with regard to a real moral dilemma.

Suppose, as seems likely, that Netanyahu had reason to fear for his coalition majority on the eve of the vote on Hebron, if he didn't go along with the Bar-On appointment. This would be consistent with the undisguised, unseemly, and, indeed, inconsiderate haste with which the matter was pushed through, despite the request of several ministers that it be put off for a week.

If these are the facts, then Netanyahu was faced with a hard choice. He wanted the Hebron deal, but he also respected the negative view of the Bar-On appointment of his confidants, Yitzhak Molcho and David Shimron.

Did he get his priorities right? Would either of his two immediate predecessors have decided any differently?

The writer is a legal and political commentator.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### TRANSFORMING EVENTS

Sir, — Mr. Shawn Pine (Letters, February 20) appears to believe that I ought to have exactly the same views as in 1971. This is an absurd notion.

Here are some of the transforming events which seem to have escaped Mr. Pine's notice.

1) In 1979, Prime Minister Begin failed to secure peace with Egypt except by renouncing all of Sinai down to the last grain of sand. Has Mr. Pine any reason to believe that President Assad will ignore this precedent and accept a lesser price for peace with Syria than Menachem Begin exuberantly paid in 1979?

2) As foreign minister in June 1967, I was directed by the

Eshkol-Dayan-Begin government to propose a peace treaty with Syria on the basis of the international boundary. Does Mr. Pine believe that nothing flows from that renunciation?

3) In 1996, the Rabin-Peres government offered Syria a peace agreement on a similar basis.

4) As a result of losing Soviet support, Syria has announced "a strategic decision" to negotiate peace with Israel on the basis of the "land for peace" principles, which was massively implemented by Menachem Begin 18 years ago without subsequent difficulty and should be implemented now.

The idea that Israel can have

both a peace treaty with Syria and permanent rule over the whole of Golan is a frivolous fantasy. My position is now, as it was in 1971, that the Syrian-Israeli boundary must be negotiated, not dictated by either side.

Mr. Pine writes "Israel needs to decide if it wants to fight the next war with its forces on the Golan or below the Golan." He totally ignores the only sane option — not to fight "the next war" at all. This is possible if we remain strong and choose the negotiating option rather than Mr. Shawn Pine's reckless and disgraceful acceptance of "the next war."

Herziya.

### ASSAD'S STRATEGY

Sir, — After bombing Cairo on July 15, 1948, our B-17 returned to its base in Israel. Early the next morning the B-17 of the 69th Hammer Squadron took off again with another load to bomb Damascus. Very little was said in the Israeli press or the international press about these raids.

Now, all I read about in *The Jerusalem Post* and the international press is about Yasser Arafat and President Hafez Assad of Syria. The last time I read *The Jerusalem Post*, I read that Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai had begged Mr. Assad to return to the negotiating table. Mordechai is taking the wrong track. He should tell this hard-line president what President Kennedy told Khrushchev during the Cuban missile crisis: "If one missile from Cuba hits the US, we will consider it an attack by Russia." Prime Minister Netanyahu should tell Assad that if one missile from Lebanon hits Israel, he will consider it an attack by Syria.

Will Netanyahu do this? I don't know. Sometimes I feel that Israel's blue-and-white flag is turning yellow. And a good many Israeli people and their leaders are becoming paranoid with fear of

Arafat's threats. Every day Israeli soldiers are being killed by Syria-supported terrorism. And Israel's air force responds by bombing Hizbullah targets in the Bekaa valley, destroying a truck or two and hitting a few dilapidated buildings.

There is not one good reason why Assad should make peace with Israel. He remains in tight control of his country. He controls the terrorist attacks by Hizbullah against Israel. He takes advantage of Israel's vulnerability. He knows how divided Israel is. He knows there is a loss of confidence among the people. He also knows Israel will lodge a complaint after each attack, drop a few bombs on the Bekaa Valley, and nothing else will happen. He likes things the way they are. He is not going to budge one inch to make peace with Israel. He doesn't care about the Golan Heights. He needs it as a symbol to show his hostility toward Israel.

What is important to Assad is to maintain pressure on Israel with Western support. He knows that Europe and the US and France in particular have vital interests in the Arab world. They have never condemned the violence by Arafat.

Assad wants to keep his alliance with Iran, pursue his quest for leadership in the Arab world and his control over Lebanon. He has the largest stockpile of missiles and chemical weapons in the region. Making peace with Israel would not compensate him for what he would lose. The US State Department will keep on treating him with kid gloves. Warren Christopher made 18 fruitless visits to Assad. But the Syrian dictator still refused to make a full peace with Israel. He will never permit an Israeli Embassy or Israel's blue-and-white flag in Damascus.

And what do some Israeli leaders have to say about all of this? "Oh, let's wait and see." Maybe Israel has lost its backbone. Maybe they now lack the courage to do battle with the enemy. Maybe they have waited too long before they can make a preemptive strike against anyone who poses a threat to them.

I guess at this late date it really doesn't matter. But when this old war bird thinks back to 1948, he feels particularly fortunate that he was able to bomb Damascus.

WILLIAM LICHTMAN,  
Col. USAF Ret.,  
RAF and the Israeli Air Force,  
Chicago, Illinois.

## POSTSCRIPTS

THERE WAS no napping in the pews, no snoring through the sermon at Southwark Cathedral when five of Britain's more eloquent preachers got together for what can only be called a preach-off.

The Rev. William Anderson, a 65-year-old Roman Catholic from Aberdeen, said he was "dumb-struck" to have won the Preacher of the Year Award.

"I didn't think it was particularly good," the slightly built, gray-haired priest said. "I think I preached better in the bathroom this morning."

Before a full congregation and a panel of judges, Anderson and the other finalists reasoned, persuaded and proclaimed in very individual styles and accents, from softest Scottish burr to ringing, full-throated Welsh.

The finalists for the contest, organized to raise preaching standards, were chosen through unannounced visits to churches.

Bishop of Durham Michael

Turnbull said Anderson "spoke particularly to the human condition at a very significantly deep level."

Anderson gets plenty of practice, preaching each sermon three times, and sometimes four, on Sundays. "You're sick of it by the fourth time," he confided.

Of his technique, he said: "You need sincerity, clarity and one or two jokes. You have to make it light, otherwise boredom sets in."

He used the poetry of John Donne and Geoffrey Chaucer to illuminate his points about hypocrisy and the search for genuine humility.

All the preachers agreed that sermons had been affected by the electronic age and become a lot shorter.

"Even within Methodism, where we like to preach for a fair amount of time, they've gotten shorter and shorter," said Dr. Arnold Kellet, 70, from Yorkshire. "But I like a full 20 minutes if I can."

INTERNATIONAL FRAMPS opened their first world conference at Mar del Plata, Argentina, but a veteran hobo criticized modern vagabonds as often being merely trendy vegetarians.

Some 300 delegates from as far afield as Greece, Canada and Colombia attended, including Mario Alonso, a bearded potter in a greasy cap, who came from his adobe home in an idyllic Argentinian refuge for ecologists and ageing hippies.

A vegetarian who plans to give a talk on bartering goods and thus avoiding money, Alonso proudly demonstrated his tramp's dining kit made up of seven different-sized tin cans for use as a stove, tea pot, plates and cups.

A JUDGE has sentenced a man to two years in jail for painting parrots with hair dye and then selling them as rare birds for thousands of dollars. Denham Peiris, 32, of Perth, plotted to get even with his former

employer, a pet shop owner who caught him stealing last year and fired him. Peiris served a short jail sentence for theft.

The bird specialist painted six common, green parrots with a reddish brown dye to make them look like rare, Indian ringneck parrots — which are worth AU\$57,000 (\$35,500) each.

Under a false name, Peiris telephoned the pet shop and arranged for a courier to swap his painted birds for 21 authentic parrots worth more than AU\$30,000 (\$23,000).

The pet shop then sold the parrots to unsuspecting breeders.

A TALE is told, by a letter-writer to a London newspaper, of a meeting that collapsed on points of order. "Rather more graphically than he perhaps intended," quoth the writer, "the minute-taker recorded that 'The Platform did not support the Chair, and the Floor did not support the Platform.'"

Jonathan Schonfeld



## Corrupt the legal system

American humorist Robert Benchley once wrote, "There are two kinds of people in the world: those who believe there are two kinds of people in the world, and those who don't."

In the same way, there are two kinds of country in the world — those that have a public morality, and those who believe they have a public morality.

Which kind of country is Israel? It is neither.

There are countries, like Britain, where a standard of honesty runs like a golden thread throughout the whole government system — the politicians, the civil service, the courts and the police. All act according to the same standards of public ethics.

There are exceptions, of course, but these only prove the rule. When a minister is caught lying, a storm breaks out that shakes Westminster to its foundations.

Here and there a bent copper or corrupt official is caught red-handed; but if you live in Britain, you don't have to double-check a government official to prove he isn't lying, cheating or corrupt.

In other countries, Mexico, for instance (or India, or Nigeria, or Egypt, or Romania, or a hundred others) the standard is reversed. In those countries there is also no need to check whether a politician is a crook.

Everyone there, from government ministers to the mayor of the most far-flung town, knows that corruption is his destiny. No one bothers to check whether a policeman is corrupt. They pay up in advance — cash on the table, according to fixed rates — whether it's to the chief of police, or to the village cop.

In those countries everyone knows there's no point wasting money on hiring a lawyer, when you can buy a judge for less.

Both systems work well, because each is in perfect balance. In Britain, as in Mexico, you know exactly how to interpret

YOSEF LAPID

what you are told. You know what to expect, how to behave, and what the consequences will be. The same is largely true of the US. I once rode with a friend in his Lincoln from New York to Boston. On the way a state trooper stopped us for speeding. My pal handed over his driving license, which had a \$50 bill folded inside. The policeman took out the bill, gave back the license, and drove off. After inserting a fresh \$50 bill

**It's the only way to stop total disintegration**

into his license, my friend drove on. Later he explained that he would rather pay one hard-up policeman \$50 than a load of bureaucrats \$100.

OUR problem in Israel is that here things are totally out of whack. There's no internal balance.

Our political system is corrupt to the core; politicians are like spiders caught in their own webs. You can't tell who's sucking whose blood. Even the lies are getting hard to believe.

The TV news comes across more and more like a comedy of errors. Our public figures spend a large part of their time being interrogated, preparing briefs, standing trial, and offering threadbare excuses for their actions.

But side by side with our rotten Mexican-style political setup, we have a legal system even the British would be proud of. Our Supreme Court is the terror of the country.

The judges' hands are as clean as surgeons' in an operating theater. Government attorneys answer only to God and the statute book. Even our police are independent

and incorruptible. Worst of all, academics and the media have educated our public to standards considered normal in civilized countries.

This gap between a flawed political system on the one hand and an exemplary judiciary on the other is crippling the country.

If you can buy a politician — with money, services, an exchange of favors, or whatever — but that politician can't bribe a policeman or even a judge, where will it all end? We witness the sorry result of this imbalance all day, every day.

The ideal solution, of course, would be to improve the political system. But bitter experience indicates that we may as well forget about that. Our younger generation of public figures is no less corrupt than the older one.

So if we can't purify our political lives, we have no choice but to even up the balance on the other side. Consequently, what we need to do is corrupt the legal system.

Only a corrupt police force can free our politicians to work for the public good. Only if judges start accepting bribes can there be any chance of politicians doing their thing in peace and tranquility.

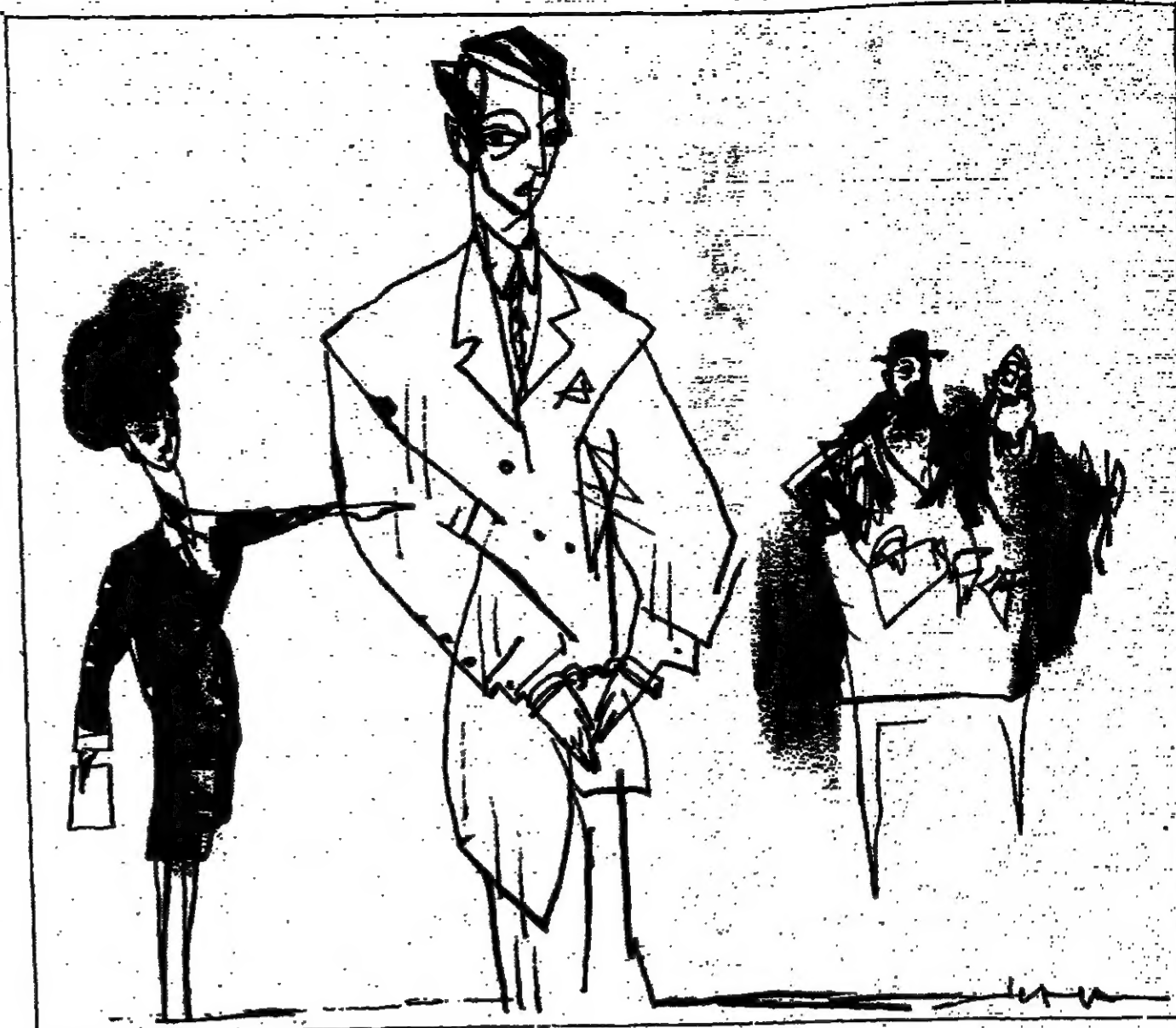
The state comptroller needs to draw up a bribery scale, according to the position of the office holder and the severity of the offense.

For example, it would be only elementary justice that when the chief of police buried the file on a corrupt minister, he would be more grandly rewarded than a patrolman who tore up a traffic ticket for a pizza delivery boy.

And the president of the Supreme Court wouldn't be able to let a criminal politician off without getting — at least — a villa in Acapulco in return.

Let's institute this reform now, before the country completely collapses.

The author is editorial writer for Ma'ariv.



## Potential 'prisoners of Zion'

SHARON SHIENHAV

The US Embassy in Israel recently issued a startling amendment to its Consular Information Sheet. Its purpose is to provide "additional information" for a select group of American travelers... recalcitrant Jewish husbands.

Included in a long list of general information available on Internet, the brief paragraph states: "In some cases, Jewish Americans, who entered Israel as tourists, have become defendants in divorce cases filed against them in a Rabbinical Court in Israel by their American spouses, who are seeking a religious divorce that the defendants have refused to give."

These Americans have been detained in Israel for prolonged periods, while the Israeli courts consider whether such individuals have sufficient ties to Israel to establish Rabbinical Court jurisdiction.

As a Jewish woman's rights lawyer, I have to admit that the US government's warning afforded me a moment of satisfaction, if not actual glee.

Having represented hundreds of Jewish women seeking a religious divorce or get, and observing firsthand the injustice and inequality built into a system which permits a husband to blackmail his wife by denying her the freedom to remarry unless she "pays him off," there is surely an element of justice in such a husband's freedom to travel being restricted.

In this case, Jewish American husbands are being notified that "they may be subject to involuntary arrest and prolonged stays in Israel."

Missing from the Consular Information Sheet's diplomatic presentation is the fact that such a husband may find himself arrested and taken off to jail, should he attempt to leave Israel; also that his legal fees could run into the tens of thousands of dollars.

Jewish women whose husbands refuse to give them a get have received a great deal of publicity, and public sympathy, for their plight. These women, unable to remarry until their husbands agree to the get, are modern-day *agnon*, or "anchored" women.

Most of us have heard painful stories about women who wait years — sometimes decades — to

obtain their freedom from unwanted or non-existent marriages (where, for example, a husband has lived with another woman for years, or even remarried).

Those who can, and are willing, often pay large sums of money to greedy husbands so they can obtain a get.

The rabbinical establishment, here and abroad, claims it is seeking solutions to this shameful situation that denies Jewish women the basic human right to marry and raise a family.

Women's organizations, in the forefront of the fight to unchain *agnon*, have been frustrated by the rabbis' barely perceptible

progress in finding those solutions. The women themselves are angry and depressed. Often they are desperate.

Sanctions such as imprisoning recalcitrant husbands have been available to the rabbinical courts for over 40 years — but they are rarely used, something that is very hard to understand.

Two years ago, Israeli women's rights activists and concerned rabbis got together and pushed through legislation providing additional civil sanctions. Rabbinical courts can now confiscate a husband's driver's license, passport, professional license, and credit card; he can also lose a government job.

While these sanctions haven't been used nearly often enough, Israeli husbands have become aware of their existence.

Since many clearly care far more about their pockets than about their wives, the effect of even the threat of financial loss on these men shouldn't be underestimated.

WHAT about recalcitrant American Jewish husbands? Sadly, American Jewish women chained to such men do not have the options available to their Israeli sisters. The reason is that the US rabbinical courts, not recalcitrant Jewish husbands are beginning to find that their attitude can carry a hefty price tag

**Recalcitrant Jewish husbands are beginning to find that their attitude can carry a hefty price tag**

order against a recalcitrant husband from New York who was in Israel.

Trying to leave from Ben-Gurion Airport with his second wife after spending Succot here, the man — amid great drama and to his utter amazement — was arrested, and his passport confiscated. After a night in jail, he was brought before the rabbinical court.

The court found that he had refused to give his first wife a get, despite the fact that he had remarried after a civil divorce in New York.

The husband protested that he was quite willing to give the get, on one condition: that his first wife agree to "renegotiate" the property settlement ordered by the civil court at the time of the civil divorce. In other words, he

was blackmailing her. Seizing the opportunity to free an American *agnon*, the rabbis told the husband in no uncertain terms that if he wanted out of jail, and to leave Israel, all he needed to do was give the get.

The rabbis who heard the case were impressed by the wife's argument that only from Israel's rabbinical courts could she hope for justice and the freedom to remarry. Such an argument could be made by an *agnon* anywhere in the world.

Unwilling to free his first wife and unable to leave Israel because of the restraining order, that greedy and vindictive man found himself ensnared in the intricacies of the Israeli court system.

Running from the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court to the Supreme Court, sitting as a High Court of Justice, then to the Rabbinical Court of Appeals, back to the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court, and again to the High Court of Justice, that once-complacent husband suddenly discovered that recalcitrance can cost dearly, both in time and money.

Aggravated of the world, arsel You have nothing to lose but your chains.

If your husband is planning to visit Israel, file your case in the rabbinical court here. Your husband may not be willing to spend a small fortune on legal fees to end his "involuntary and prolonged" stay in Israel.

Even if he decides that visiting Israel isn't such a good idea after all, you will, by restricting his freedom, have weighted the scales of justice slightly in your favor.

The writer, Na'amat's legal adviser in Jerusalem 1982-94, currently directs its overseas department.

## The judges have lost their vision of justice

MORDECHAI GAFNI

substantively and, ultimately, morally.

On a procedural level: The courts lack any self-disciplining mechanism — an ombudsman, if you will. A meaningful evaluation procedure is particularly lacking on three levels: legal decision content, operational policies, and the general nature of judge-litigant interaction.

Tragically, the tone rabbinical court judges take with their secular clients often ranges from con-

**The beauty and integrity of Jewish law? Not in our rabbinical courts**

descending to disparaging and dismissive.

In terms of substance: The courts are unwilling to employ a range of halachically-viable alternatives in dealing with this generation's unique problems.

For example, it is nearly impossible for a secular family to adopt a non-Jewish child and have him/her converted. Yet the halachic mechanisms are available.

There are perhaps as many as 10,000 Jewish women whose husbands have refused to grant them a get. In the majority of these cases, the rabbinical courts refuse to employ the halachic mechanisms available to force the husband to grant the divorce.

Tens of thousands of new immigrants are "Jewish" according to the Law of Return, but not Jewish according to Halacha. The rabbinical court offers no viable model of conversion to this community; it refuses to implement halachic precedents that would allow for their conversion.

The result: Within a generation, half of the self-identified Jewish population in Israel won't be able to marry the other half.

Intermarriage, a tragedy thought to be the exclusive providence of the Diaspora, will soon become the bane of Israel and the end of the reality of one united Jewish people.

MOST rabbinical court judges come from the haredi world. Their fundamental posture is one of disdain for the secular world in general, and for their secular clients specifically.

Sadly, these judges view the decisive use of available halachic mechanisms to alleviate the sufferings of their clients as somehow endorsing a secular lifestyle.

For the first time in Jewish history, the rabbinical court no longer feels ethically responsible for the welfare of those who employ its services. Rather, in a tragic and ironic turnabout, a rabbinical court

judge feels obligated to protect the purity of the law from his litigants' defiling impurity.

An absurd and partially subconscious adversarial relationship has developed between judge and litigant. The result: Kafkaesque trials in the rabbinical courts.

A talmudic tradition has it that in messianic times, Elijah the Prophet will render difficult halachic decisions. The hassidic master Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev asked: Why Elijah, and not Moses? Surely Moses was a greater scholar?

This is how the master explained it: Moses died, whereas Elijah, according to our tradition, lives on in every generation. He is present at every Pessah seder, at every circumcision.

In other words, intellectual perspicacity is insufficient when deciding difficult legal issues. To decide law, one must be "of the people," feeling their pain intimately, sharing their joy.

Heretofore, only groups that the rabbinical courts view as being against Halacha have come out and challenged the religious court system.

Virtually no one in the halachic community has been willing to stand up and say what everyone knows to be true: that this emperor has no clothes, that it has divested itself of humility, of real understanding, of genuine responsibility.

Change can only come about when the halachic community is made sufficiently aware of how outrageous the current functioning of the rabbinical courts is. The time for change has come. In fact, it is long overdue.

The writer is director and scholar in residence of Mila, the Jerusalem Institute for Culture.

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# Zaire peace path inches forward

By TOM COHEN

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Fragile talks aimed at launching a Zaire peace process took a step forward yesterday, with an envoy for President Mobutu Sese Seko saying the ailing leader wants peace.

But it remained unclear if Mobutu's government will meet face-to-face anytime soon with rebels seeking to topple it. Amid reports of continued fighting in eastern Zaire for Kinshasa, one of two government-held towns with airports in the region, international efforts to work out a cease-fire increased.

South African President Nelson Mandela held a news conference with Mobutu envoy Honore Ngbanda yesterday, the morning after Mandela appeared before journalists with Zairian rebel leader Laurent Kabila.

In both appearances, Mandela and his invited guests expressed the need for negotiations and peace in Zaire.

"President Mobutu himself is committed to finding a peaceful solution... in respect of the territorial sovereignty of Zaire," Ngbanda said in French through an interpreter.

But he stopped short of committing Mobutu's government to direct peace talks with Kabila, saying that he was in South Africa for talks with South African and United States officials on the Zaire conflict.

Kabila said Wednesday night he was ready for direct negotiations

with Mobutu's government in what would be the first face-to-face talks since his rebel movement began fighting last September.

Conditions for such talks laid down by both sides appeared to be major obstacles to any immediate negotiations. Kabila wants to talk to Mobutu himself and seeks a guarantee the veteran leader will step down, while Mobutu overcomes a divided government with hardliners demanding a fight against the rebels and others pushing for peace talks.

In Washington, a US source said the talks made little progress yesterday, with both sides hardening their positions.

According to the source, Kabila demands face-to-face talks before he'll agree to a cease-fire. Mobutu's government, meanwhile, believes the rebels depend on foreign backing from neighboring Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, and that cutting that support would quell the rebellion.

"They are not really dealing with the fact that they have a serious rebellion in their country," said the source, who was contacted by telephone from South Africa. "They seem to think the problem is international."

Mandela, appearing with Ngbanda yesterday, spoke of the precarious nature of the talks, saying confidentiality is essential to keep them from collapsing.

"The discussions now have taken an advanced form," he said, apologizing for the virtual information blackout on the talks.

## 7 killed, 40 injured in Colombian blast

BOGOTA (Reuters) — At least seven people were killed and about 40 injured yesterday when a powerful bomb blast ripped through a small town in Colombia's north-western banana-growing region of Uraba, authorities said.

"There are seven dead and 40 injured," said Gen. Ivan Ramirez, who blamed the bomb on the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

He said the bomb — which exploded in the back of a pickup truck and was believed to have contained 50 kg. of dynamite — tore through the downtown area of the small town of Apartado at about 8:50 local time.

A four-story hotel called El

Pescador was completely leveled in the blast and other nearby buildings, including the police headquarters, suffered serious damage, Ramirez said.

At least six guerrillas were killed in a firefight with the military on Sunday in Uraba, and Ramirez said the truck bomb was meant to avenge both the deaths and the army's recent dismantling of several rebel encampments in Uraba.

In violence elsewhere in Colombia, authorities said two policemen were killed and four others wounded in an overnight attack by about 200 FARC rebels on the small town of Labranzagrande in the Cordillera Oriental mountains of central Boyaca province.

## Clapton, Beatles, Hillary win Grammys

By ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Rock giant Eric Clapton won two of the music industry's top awards at the 39th annual Grammy ceremonies on Wednesday, while a French Canadian singer and a 14-year-old country star stole the audience's heart.

Quebec native Celine Dion's "Falling Into You" was named album of the year and best pop album. The album of the year award was not totally unexpected, but Dion seemed shocked.

She took the stage of Madison Square Garden amid thunderous cheers, saying, "This is incredible, this is incredible. This is a dream come true." She ended a long speech filled with thank yous to the people "in the shadows" by saying in French, "Hello Quebec. I love you. Thank you very much."

Clapton, along with megastar producer Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, won the record of the year award for "Change the World." Clapton also won the best male pop vocal performance award and the writers of the song from the John Travolta film *Phenomenon* walked off with the song of the year award.

Edmonds, who came into the awards ceremony with 12 nominations, the most of anyone, won three Grammys.

In one of the evening's biggest surprises, 14-year-old country singer LeAnn Rimes was named best new artist of the year, beating out groups called Garbage and No Doubt, Alaska-born singer Jewel and a one-man band known as the Tony Rich Project.

The awards spanned the generations from 70-year-old Tony Bennett winning the best traditional pop vocal performance award to Rimes not only taking the new artist award but best female country vocal award as well.

"I never expected this at all," said Rimes, who was close to tears. Her hit album "Blue," recorded when she was only 11 years old, topped the country charts and placed third on the top 10 chart.

She became the youngest person to win multiple Grammys and the first country singer in 30 years to be named new artist of the year.

"Success can be a great thing. It can also be the worst thing. I am going to keep myself grounded," she said.

The long-disbanded Beatles



First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton holds up her Grammy for Best Spoken or Non-Musical Album for her book-on-tape 'It Takes a Village,' at the 39th annual Grammy Awards in New York on Wednesday.

and Hillary Rodham Clinton were also winners.

Clinton won a Grammy in the spoken word category for the audiobook version of *It Takes a Village* her bestselling book about child-rearing that was roundly attacked by Republicans

and defended by Democrats in the 1996 presidential campaign.

At a private ceremony before the start of the glittering TV special at Madison Square Garden to celebrate the main Grammy categories, a clearly pleased Clinton declared, "I was very surprised

that they give Grammys to tone-deaf singers like me." She juggled her schedule to get to New York in time for the private awards and then back to Washington in time for a state dinner in honor of Chile's President Eduardo Frei.

Clinton beat several experienced actors and broadcasters, including Garrison Keillor, Charles Kuralt, Lauren Bacall, and Gregory Peck.

The Beatles, who broke up 27 years ago, also emerged a winner, snaring a Grammy for best pop duo or group with vocals for "Free As a Bird," a previously unreleased song that appeared on their 1996 album *Anthology*.

"Free As a Bird" also won the short form video award and *Anthology* won the long form video award. The Beatles have now won a total of seven Grammys. Their last Grammy was in 1967.

Bruce Springsteen, best known for his high energy rock 'n' roll, won the contemporary folk music award for his album, *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, a haunting, quiet tribute to the great folk singers of the Depression era.

Smashing Pumpkins, the band that lost a keyboard artist to a heroin overdose the last time it played Madison Square Garden, won the best hard-rock performance award for "Bullet with Butterfly Wings." "It has been a really crazy year," said guitarist James Iha.

Lyle Lovett won the best country music album award for his *The Road to Ensenada*. R&B diva Toni Braxton won the best female pop vocal performance award for "Un-Break My Heart." Braxton also won a Grammy as best female R&B vocalist for her song "You're Makin' Me High."

Alternative rock star Beck won the best male rock performance for his song "Where It's At." Folk rock singer Tracy Chapman won the best rock song award for "Give Me One Reason." The best rock album award went to Sheryl Crow for her album, which simply bore her name.

Herbie Hancock, who made a rare foray into traditional jazz last year, won the best instrumental composition award for "Mannhattan (Island of Lights and Love)." Other jazz awards went to Wayne Shorter, Michael Brecker and Cassandra Wilson and the historical album of the year went to an acclaimed jazz collaboration, *The Complete Columbia Studio Recordings of Gil Evans and Miles Davis*.

Comic Al Franken, a big supporter of the Clintons, won the comedy album of the year award for *Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot*.

## Irish permitted divorce for first time since independence

DUBLIN (AP) — Divorce became permissible in this overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country yesterday, and Mags O'Brien got the documents together to split officially with a husband she left 14 years ago.

"Obviously I am delighted I can finally do it," O'Brien told

the AP. "But it's still at the paperwork stage." But courts and lawyers reported no rush yesterday.

O'Brien, who paid \$6.75 for the legal documents at a government office, said she planned to wait until next week to hand them in at the Dublin Circuit Court.

With church-driven opposition overturned, the question of money remained — particularly for women raising children alone or men who have set up homes with new partners.

"We are all saying good-o," said Louise Smith, who left her cheating husband nearly 12 years

ago. "But the fact is we don't have the money to do it." There are an estimated 90,000 separated people in the Republic of Ireland. By divorce day, about 1,000 had applied for state legal aid to pursue their cases.

O'Brien was active in the long campaign to permit divorce for the

first time since Ireland became independent from Britain in 1921.

By a wafer-thin margin of 9,118 ballots out of 1.6 million votes cast, the Irish in a 1995 referendum approved amending the constitution to allow divorce. Couples must have been separated for at least four years.

## Police seek two in Warsaw synagogue arson

WARSAW (AP) — Police were searching yesterday for a young couple seen near the Warsaw synagogue shortly before an apparent arson-caused fire erupted in its vestibule, as newspapers, politicians, and Catholic leaders condemned the attack.

The fire early Wednesday at the only synagogue in use in Warsaw destroyed two carved wooden doors and blackened the entrance hall.

A man and woman in their early 20s could have been involved in

what police spokesman Witold Gieralt called an "evident" case of arson.

The arson was condemned by Polish government officials and Catholic church leaders, as well as leaders of Warsaw's 1,000-member Jewish community.

Representatives of the president, prime minister, and city authorities joined the US ambassador and 300 other people in prayers at the synagogue Wednesday night in a show of solidarity.

"We could see that we are not

alone and that a lot of people here in Poland are sharing our pain," Poland's Chief Rabbi Menachem Joskovich told Warsaw's Radio Zet yesterday. "I believe the authorities are doing everything possible so that such an act will not be repeated."

The communist authorities rebuilt the synagogue in 1983, after Nazis had used it as a stable and then destroyed it. Founded in 1902, the synagogue stands in the former Jewish district of Warsaw, next to the state-run Jewish Theater.

## Circumcision makes babies sensitive to pain

LONDON (Reuters) — Circumcising baby boys can make them super-sensitive to pain for months, Canadian researchers said, in a report being released today.

But using an anesthetic cream at the time of the operation can reduce the effect, Anna Taddio and colleagues at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children reported in the *Lancet* medical journal.

Building on the earlier research, they tested 87 babies, dividing them into three groups — uncircumcised, circumcised without anesthetic, and circumcised using a lidocaine-prilocaine cream.

"Circumcised infants showed a stronger pain response to subsequent routine vaccination than uncircumcised infants," they wrote. But the anesthetic cream lessened the response.

Taddio's group theorizes that pain such as circumcision soon after birth somehow rewires the pain response, programming babies to react more strongly.

## US rep. apologizes for blasting 'Schindler's List' broadcast

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Oklahoma congressman apologized yesterday for his denunciation of the NBC television network for broadcasting the movie *Schindler's List* during family viewing time.

"To all those that I've offended, I offer an apology," Republican Representative Tom Coburn said Wednesday. "And I personally apologize for appearing insensitive to the worst atrocities known to humankind."

Coburn said he felt "terrible that my criticism of NBC for airing this movie has been misinterpreted as a criticism of *Schindler's List* or the millions of Jews who died senselessly during the Holocaust."

He called it "a landmark movie that profoundly affected me and my family when we saw it in the movie theater."

He added that he believes everyone who is about 16 or older should see the film as an educa-

tional experience and that his concern was that it was aired at a time when much younger children might be watching TV alone.

On Tuesday, Coburn, who heads the Congressional Family Caucus, had said NBC took network television "to an all-time low, with full-frontal nudity, violence, and profanity."

The movie, he noted, depicted "multiple gunshot head wounds, vile language, full-frontal nudity, and irresponsible sexual activity."

William Bennett, a GOP activist who has been campaigning against gratuitous sex and violence in entertainment media, said Coburn's view "obscures, even obliterates, the distinction between gratuitous violence and nudity — that is, violence and nudity to titillate — and violence and human realism essential to the telling of an important story or historical truth."

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St. Sgt. **GIDON POSNER** ז"ל

We will hold a graveside service and unveiling of the tombstone Friday, March 7, 1997 (28 Adar, 5757) at 11:30 a.m. at the Kfar Sava Military Cemetery

A bus will leave at 10:30 a.m. from the Shalom Hotel, 216 Rehov Hayarkon, Tel Aviv

The Family

Our heartfelt thanks to all those who expressed condolences

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**MARY SANDERS**

August 11, 1911 - February 23, 1997

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Friday, February 28, 1997

# NEWSinFOCUS

## The last bastion of the Likud

Jerusalem is becoming the centerpiece of Likud ideology as visions of a Greater Land of Israel fade, David Makovsky reports

It seems that this week's hotly contested Har Homa decision is motivated not only by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's need to establish a position before final-status peace talks on Jerusalem, but also to provide the prime minister and his party with something they feel has been lacking since their dream of keeping all of the West Bank faded: another cause.

While Labor has succeeded in turning the peace process into its new organizing principle, it has not been as easy for the Likud. Netanyahu reminded Arab journalists this week that nobody would have believed that he would accept the Oslo Accords as the basis for peace, shake Yasser Arafat's hand, pull back troops from Hebron, and release hard-core Palestinian prisoners. Indeed, the more Netanyahu has been hailed abroad and at home as a statesman who has favored pragmatism over ideology by striking a deal in Hebron, the more the faithful have winced

met premier and Likud ideologue Yitzhak Shamir gave to *Ma'ariv* last week, he lashed out at his successor, Netanyahu. He said, "the fact is he's working against the principles of the Likud. He has no principles at all. I don't see any principles."

However, Likud members concede that as controlling the whole West Bank is no longer realistic, an undivided Jerusalem has become the new centerpiece. In an interview this week, Jerusalem's Mayor Ehud Olmert said, "due to other concessions made to the Palestinians, de facto, the center of gravity of the Likud has moved to Jerusalem. This is one reason why Har Homa has become important." Last week, Olmert thundered: "If there is no Har Homa, there is no Bibi."

It is known that Jerusalem's biggest builder has not been Netanyahu but Laborite and former mayor Teddy Kollek. Interviewed this week about the Har Homa decision, Kollek sup-

ported Netanyahu but said he was annoyed with the style. "We built a lot, but the Likud feels it has to announce everything first."

It seems that since Jerusalem is important to Israelis across the political spectrum, Labor MKs are furious when they see the Likud trying to appropriate this issue as their own. Nonetheless, Jerusalem has another purpose for the Likud: filling an ideological vacuum. Moshe Halberthal, who teaches political philosophy at the Hebrew University, said, "Jerusalem has become the Likud's last ideological bastion." An official in the Prime Minister's Office, who requested anonymity, admitted, "it is true that our sights have been lowered, but they are very intense. We cannot be flexible on Jerusalem because we have already given in on our doctrine. We must say this is our red line." The official agreed that the Likud will now seek to recast the Likud ideology so Jerusalem, which was considered a given in the past, now occupies center stage.

IF FOR the Likud Jerusalem is where the dream began, for the Palestinians, Jerusalem is the ultimate fulfillment of its territorial aspirations. Yasser Arafat has given so many speeches about how the Palestinians won't rest until the Palestinian flag is hoisted on the minarets of eastern Jerusalem. Set behind Yasser Arafat's desk has consistently been a picture of Jerusalem's al-Aksa Mosque.

"If there is no Har Homa, there is no Bibi."

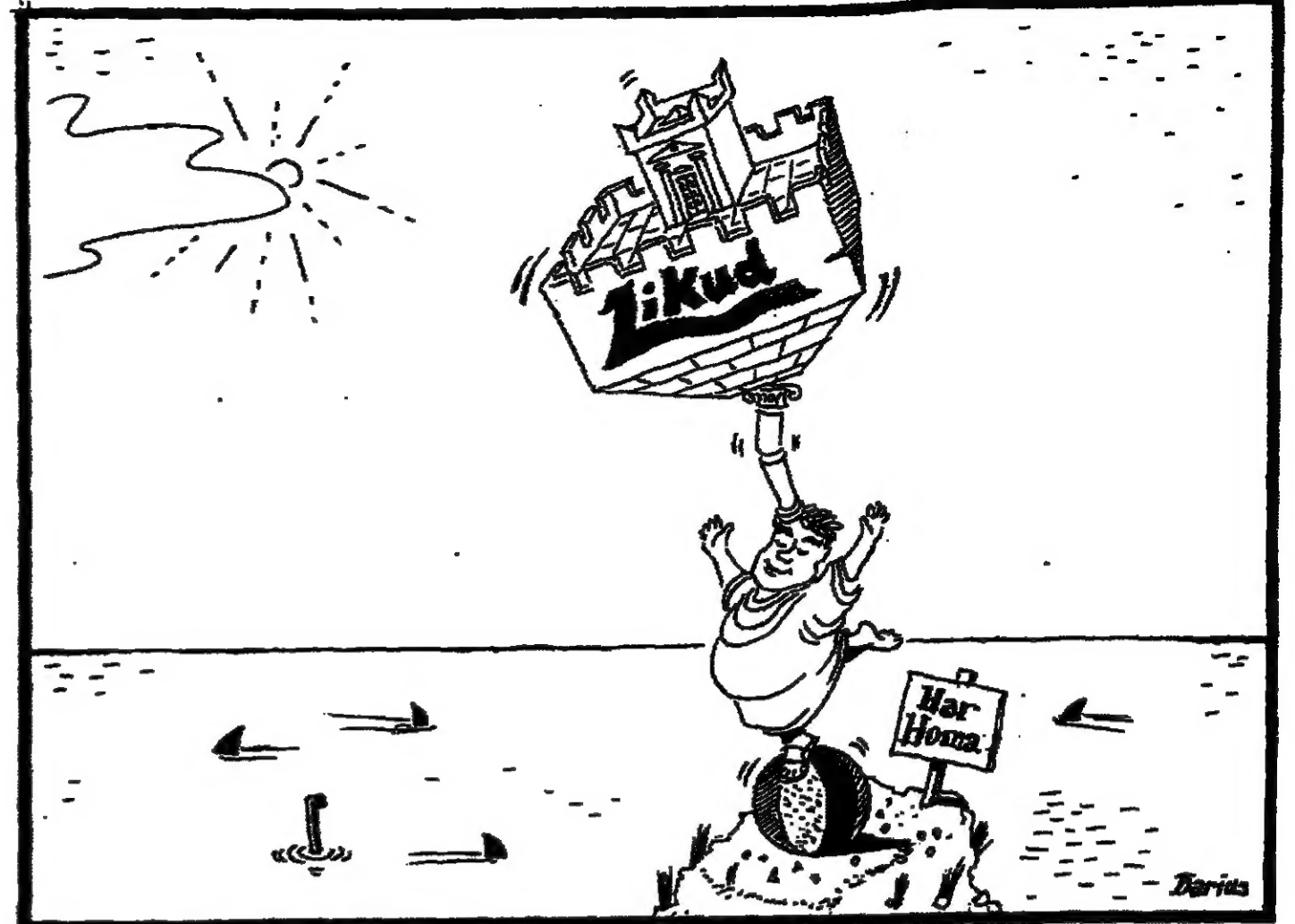
—Ehud Olmert

wondering what is left of the old dream. Therefore, the coalition pressure on Har Homa has been fierce.

In a startling interview that for-

ported Netanyahu but said he was annoyed with the style. "We built a lot, but the Likud feels it has to announce everything first."

It seems that since Jerusalem is



Due to pullbacks as a result of the peace process, the picture has changed. The Palestinian Authority has gained control

over all the cities of the West Bank (except 20 percent of Hebron) and with more territory to be ceded in the scheduled

pullback next week and the partition of the West Bank considered a fait accompli, Netanyahu's version of a final-

status agreement with the Palestinians includes ceding

Continued on Page 8

## The quiet before the storm

It was a little past 8 p.m. when somebody spotted several men in Arab headaddresses running in a Jewish settlement in the Judean hills toward a mobile home. Shots were fired and the settlement was placed on alert.

Within a few minutes, the word was out. Terrorists had taken over a mobile home where soldiers

of armed civilians to take their positions. The IDF regional headquarters was called as several civilians tried to speak to the terrorists. The report was that one soldier was being held hostage by as many as three captors.

This was an exercise, one that is being rehearsed in settlements around the territories as the IDF

The IDF is preparing for a possible showdown with the PA over Har Homa, Steve Rodan reports

Military commanders are bracing themselves for terrorist infiltrations and organized gun battles with the Palestinian Authority. The

lot since last September," a senior security source says. "The main thing they've learned is that they can attack us and still have the world on their side."

Boaz Ganor, 35, academic director of the Herzliya-based International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, part of the Interdisciplinary Center, agrees. "The September violence worked," he says. "[PA Chief Yasser] Arafat achieved all of what he wanted and more. Whether he uses violence again depends on the behavior of the government of Israel."

Intelligence sources say the PA is preparing for a showdown. They assert that Force 17 elite troops, loyal only to Arafat, are being sent to Bethlehem and Hebron in what appears to be a move to reinforce the towns in preparation for a confrontation with the IDF.

In addition, the Palestinians are constantly smuggling weapons into the West Bank and Gaza.

Security sources say the weapons are not only submachine guns and light ammunition. They include anti-tank weapons, mortars, and other equipment the IDF may not be aware of.

"Our border with the Palestinians is open, regardless of the closure," a senior security source says. "They can smuggle things at will."

For their part, Palestinian officials are making it clear that the threat of renewed violence is real although they deny that they are

good measure and determined that, at most, Israel would be confronted during an all-out Arab war by 50,000 men armed with light weapons.

Today, officials say, that assessment was completely wrong.

First, the government and the IDF did not anticipate that Arafat's forces would battle Israeli troops alone. Second, they did not expect that thousands of young people would lead confrontations against the IDF throughout the territories and coordinate with Palestinian forces. The result was a combination of Palestinian civilian attacks backed up by Palestinian police firepower that left Israeli soldiers stunned.

Senior government sources say that will not happen again.

Israeli officials have told the US that another outbreak of violence could erupt, if not shelved, further IDF withdrawal from the territories, scheduled to start in another

week. Moreover, the IDF has plans to quickly quell demonstrations and Central Command has moved in equipment into the Har Homa area to control protests. IDF commanders have drafted and approved plans for the deployment of tanks and sharpshooters to put down unrest.

"I guarantee you that if they attack us we will not be restrained," one source says. "There will be many dead."

Now that the decision to build Har Homa has been approved, intelligence sources expect the Palestinians to test the Israelis within days. They say Arafat's point man to organize the violence will be Col. Jibril Rajoub, head of the Palestinian Preventive Security Apparatus.

The scenario outlined by the Israeli sources is that Rajoub will organize massive Palestinian

Continued on Page 18



IDF soldiers face off with Palestinian demonstrators at Har Homa.

(Brian Heisler)

were living. The settlement's security liaison called out for the emergency team

prepares for the possibility of another round of violence with the Palestinians.

spark could be this week's decision to build in Jerusalem's Har Homa. "The Palestinians have learned a

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# Stephen Flatow vs. the State of Iran

**A New Jersey real estate lawyer is suing Iran over the death of his daughter, killed in a 1995 suicide bus bombing here. Hillel Kuttler reports from Washington**

To this day, Stephen Flatow believes his 20-year-old daughter Alisa never saw it coming. He does not mean only the suicide bomber who rode alongside Egged bus No. 36 and blew up himself and eight passengers traveling near Kfar Darom on April 9, 1995. But danger generally.

That day, Alisa was on her first-ever outing to the Gaza Strip. The New Jersey woman was religious and loved to sunbathe. And Gush Katif's beach provided separate men's and women's swimming areas.

Just three months earlier, father and daughter met for what would be the last time, when the Flatows traveled to Israel to visit Alisa.

She was on her sixth visit to Israel, spending the year studying at Jerusalem's Nishmat seminary. Stephen and Alisa were leaving Friday night prayers at the Western Wall and stopped at the plaza steps.

Stephen told her that being in Israel was like being in the Garden of Eden. Alisa replied, "It really is, isn't it?" They spoke briefly about the need to bring peace with the Arabs.

"Her view was that it wouldn't affect her directly," Stephen says of the region's tensions. "And she felt that there's people here dealing with people, that you had to give both sides the opportunity to get together and talk."

"I don't think she saw herself in harm's way being in Israel. I think she felt comfortable there; I felt she was comfortable there.... I don't think she ever really thought that something like this would happen to her. I used to be more comfortable when Alisa was in Israel than when she was visiting

her boyfriend on the Lower East Side."

Alisa was careful. Stephen impressed a set of rules on each of the five children he and his wife Rosalyn have sent to Israel: Only travel to recognized destinations. Never go alone.

And always take public buses. Alisa abided by the rules.

NOW STEPHEN Flatow is hoping the new rules drawn up by Congress bring solace and justice to the family and levy a financial disincentive on those involved in her death from perpetrating such a crime again.

Stephen Flatow is suing Iran. Until last year, he might have been left to trudge off and join hands in the somber circle of bereaved parents, with no outlet other than the pride of knowing that Alisa's organs are now keeping three Israelis alive.

But last April President Clinton signed a massive counter-terrorism bill that stripped away the "sovereign immunity" foreign countries enjoyed from prosecution by Americans. And in September, amendments in both houses of Congress went a step further by opening up those countries to civil suits for damages for their involvement in international terrorism.

The case, which Flatow filed in federal court here on Wednesday, could be a precedent. Flatow is seeking \$150 million in damages. Suits brought by the families of terrorism victims of the PLO and Libya have gone nowhere yet. Flatow knows the fight will be difficult and lengthy (at least seven years) but believes that unlike the others, he has statutory teeth behind his effort.

He also has Steven Perles, the Washington lawyer who tried to



Stephen and Rosalyn Flatow mourn their daughter Alisa (right), who was killed near Kfar Darom two years ago. (Isaac Harari)

sue Germany for damages on behalf of Hugo Prinz, who suffered through and survived the Holocaust as a naturalized American citizen. The case was thrown out when a judge determined US courts had no jurisdiction, but in a second attempt Prinz and Perles got the case heard and eventually won.

Perles intends to muster America's greatest counter-terrorism experts, marshaling testimony and evidence to buttress his claim that Iran is culpable in Alisa's death. The logic being: Iran funds and supports the Islamic Jihad, and it took responsibility for the bomb that killed Alisa.

According to Perles, the State Department's coordinator for counter-terrorism Philip Wilcox told him and Flatow that Iran funds it to the tune of \$2 million annually.

Wilcox also told them that the US believes it did in fact carry out the attack that killed Alisa and seven others. In last year's report on terrorism, the State Department only stated that it claimed responsibility for the Kfar Darom bombing.

While refusing to comment directly on the Flatow case,

Wilcox says that the US is concerned about state-sponsored terrorism and is looking "for ways to bring those states into account."

The administration, he says, supports the laws making the Flatow suit possible.

Flatow and Perles met with Israeli ambassador Elihu Ben-Elissar and officials of the New York consulate.

But, even though prime ministers Rabin and Peres charged repeatedly that the tenets of Iran

Pan Am 103 bombing over Lockerbie, he says, it must first be proven in a court of law that the US is guilty in this case and that Iran is behind the group.

FLATOW AND Perles make a striking team, sitting at a conference table in the latter's office just hours before filing the suit. Flatow, grayish and stocky, Perles, balding and lean.

They're both in their mid-to-late 40s, dressed in the oh-so-proper

**"I used to be more comfortable when Alisa was in Israel than when she was visiting her boyfriend on the Lower East Side."**

—Stephen Flatow

are wrapped around international terrorism, Flatow has not yet asked for Israel's assistance in their case.

Steve Emerson, a Washington-based expert on terrorist groups, believes that Perles has a tough case ahead. While the US ascertained Libya's involvement in the

lawyerly style of starched white shirts and red suspenders, jackets off for now.

Flatow is serious but chuckles occasionally. He's used to talking about his daughter. His composure is in check. He speaks in short sentences and to the point.



He finds amusing the suggestion that Alisa might have followed her father into the legal field. (He practices real-estate law.)

"Alisa was what you would call a people person. Alisa wanted to be perhaps a physical therapist, an occupational therapist," he says.

"I think she could have done that or gone into Jewish education. But most importantly, she would have been the mother of a strong Jewish family." When asked why he's taking on an entire country, his voice sounds determined but lacks any hint of anger.

"We want to expose the underbelly of the [Islamic] Republic of Iran," he says. "We believe that no country should be permitted to sponsor or encourage terrorist attacks against innocent civilians no matter where they are."

More personally, Flatow is pursuing those who sent those who bombed the Egged bus that day. He wants to at least save the puncture. "I don't think the wound ever heals," he says. "It's a step in the healing process, a step in making us get on with our lives."

It's a logical step to take. I'm not a country. I can't wage war against the Iranians or the U.S. I rely upon those tools that we have at our hands, and that's the legal system.

"You have to react to a loss of a child. You have to react to a terrorist attack. If you don't react, it's just going to stay inside you and do whatever it does to your psyche and to your physical being."

"So this gives us a means to work with whatever emotions we have pent up inside us. It lets us do something constructive, as opposed to destructive, with our lives. And to an extent, it keeps Alisa alive because we're talking about her and working on her behalf."

In contrast, Rosalyn does not wish to be interviewed. Nor does Vicki Eisenfeld of West Hartford, Connecticut, whose son Matthew was killed in the first No. 18 bus bombing in Jerusalem one year ago this week.

She says only that the Flatow family "has to do what they have

to do." People deal with loss differently, Stephen Flatow explains.

He has spoken with Arline Duker of Paramus, New Jersey, whose daughter Sara was killed along with Eisenfeld, her fiancé. The two victims' families would face different circumstances should they someday decide to sue. Since Hamas took responsibility for that bombing.

Flatow says he draws strength from the Dukers and from Israeli families he's met with who experienced the same trauma as he.

But another parent of a terrorism victim, Susan Cohen, wants no part of a civil suit. Cohen, whose daughter Theodora was killed in the Lockerbie bombing, charges that two lawyers approached her with a "hard-sell" pitch for enlisting Perles in a lawsuit against Libya that would deliver many millions of dollars.

Their promotional literature included a photograph of Alisa Flatow and listed something called the Raoul Wallenberg Center for Civil Justice that is at the same address as Perles's law firm.

"It was reprehensible," she says. Perles denies the claim, saying no one represents him and that victims' families recruit him and not the opposite. He says he's been contacted by the Wallenberg Center and asked to consult with families of terrorist victims, which he has done on a pro-bono basis.

Flatow is silent as Perles gives his side.

BESHERT ("destiny"). Flatow says that what happened to Alisa was fated.

When she was five, she got into a bicycle accident. As he drove her to the hospital, Alisa cried in the back seat, asking why "these things" always happen to her. It was her third trip to the emergency room in three years.

"I tried to explain to her that things happen that we don't understand. They're called accidents. She didn't expect her friend to ride over her foot. She shouldn't let it bother her because she was in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"Now, when I travel around the country to speak to Jewish groups about organ donations or about Alisa, I sometimes hear her saying, 'Daddy, why did this happen to me?' So I pretty much think the same way: She didn't expect this to happen to her. I didn't expect this to happen to her."

"But there's one thing I know. She was in Israel, she was very proud of being Jewish. She stood up with the seven *halutzim* [soldiers] who were killed along with her, to say, 'I am a Jew. I am here with you.'"

"So I came to realize that at that time, she was not in the wrong place. She was in the right place."

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**BASTION**  
Continued from Page 7

about half of the West Bank while retaining settlement blocs where most of the settlers live, and the Jordan Valley. Yet, retaining half the territories is not a vision which Likud officials believe will inspire their voters.

But Jerusalem retains the magnetic quality. Unlike Shamir, who was willing to be unpopular in order to pursue an ideological course of building settlements to keep the West Bank, Netanyahu believes he can recast the ideology surrounding Jerusalem while winning broad public support.

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# Guardian of the gates of justice

The fate of the government may rest with Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein — a man of integrity, compassion and the occasional one-liner. Abraham Rabinovich reports

An attorney-general who reads tracts on ethics while waiting for the lights to change on his way to work should strike terror in the hearts of miscreants awaiting his attention. It is hard to imagine the amiable person of Elyakim Rubinstein

## At home with the law

Elyakim Rubinstein may wear the pants in his family but he is not necessarily the boss even when his wife works in the office which he now heads. Miriam Rubinstein, a lawyer with the Justice Ministry for the past 22 years, heads the civil department in the State Attorney's office which is part of the attorney-general's domain. However, since spouses in the civil service cannot work in a relationship where one is the other's superior, the government decision appointing Elyakim as attorney-general stipulated that Miriam would answer only to State Attorney Edna Arbel and not to him. A.R.

evoking fear, but anyone facing indictment in the Bar-On affair has reason to be concerned. Whatever personal inclinations the new attorney-general may have towards mercy will be tempered by the hard demands of justice as he sees it.

It is on Rubinstein's desk that the buck in the Bar-On affair will stop. Although he has not been directing the investigation which was already under way when he took office a month ago, he has a central role in determining its outcome.

In consultation with members of the State Attorney's Office, he will have to decide whether the police findings reveal no more than politicking in dubious taste or a criminal conspiracy to undermine one of the major foundation stones on which a society of law rests. The two choices may be separated by a gray line as thin as a moral ambiguity and as deep as sin.

Upon his call may rest the fate of the government.

For almost all of his career hitherto, the 49-year-old Rubinstein has been a civil servant at the heart of national affairs but in the shadow of the officials under whom he served, from Moshe Dayan to Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin. The Bar-On case seems likely to catapult him into the center of public attention for the first time in a quasi-independent capacity. Given the strident, often unattractive nature of political life, Rubinstein appears destined to

grace the public scene with a refreshing moral presence.

"He's a *lamed vavnik*," says a longtime friend and colleague, referring to the 36 anonymous persons who, according to Jewish tradition, sustain the world by their righteousness. "His measure for judging people is whether they have *hemla*, compassion. That's the word he uses." In addition, she said, "he has a gorgeous sense of humor."

When *The Jerusalem Post* reported in 1984 that Rubinstein had been chosen as ambassador to the UN and had already registered his children in a Hebrew school in New York, he wrote a letter to the editor saying it was news to him. "To make sure, I checked with my wife and it was news to her too. Since my oldest daughter is seven years old I doubt seriously whether she did it on her own."

Shamir recalled in an interview this week that Rubinstein, accompanying him to Washington as cabinet secretary, was a favorite of president Reagan for the jokes he told.

in the Oval Office. When secretary of state George Shultz had a meeting with the prime minister in Jerusalem one Purim, Rubinstein showed up wearing a Purim wig. A favorite line used by him in opening after-dinner talks is "Like Henry VIII said to each of his wives, 'I won't keep you long.'"

By contrast, the kippa-wearing Rubinstein takes his religion seriously. He rises early to attend synagogue, returning home by seven.

Before leaving for the office, he generally manages to study Talmud and ethical treatises, a favorite being the Hafez Haim's book on malicious gossip.

Before going out to his car, he inserts small tracts of psalms and ethical writings in his jacket to scan while waiting at red lights. One night a week, he makes sure to get home at a reasonable hour in order to join half a dozen other men in a

his defense before the Agranat Commission investigating the war's early setbacks. "People say that it was due to Eli that Dayan got out of it as well as he did," says a friend of Rubinstein.

When Dayan became foreign minister in the government of Menachem Begin in 1977, Rubinstein

instead to the man Rubinstein replaced in Washington, Binyamin Netanyahu. Two years later Shamir invited Rubinstein to become cabinet secretary. In briefing reporters after cabinet sessions, Rubinstein enjoyed repeating the government announcements in Yiddish, for Yiddish radio news, and in Arabic.

"I've never met anyone with a phenomenal memory like his," says Shamir. "He also has understanding. He knows what to say and what not to say." In addition to Rubinstein's other duties, Shamir named him head of the team negotiating peace with the Palestinians and Jordanians. His humor and storytelling helped bridge many an awkward moment in the long talks.

To the surprise of many, and the chagrin of some

so rare in our midst."

He continued as head of the Israeli delegation to bilateral peace talks with Jordan as legal adviser to the Defense Ministry. After a year, his wish for a judicial posting was realized when he was appointed to the Jerusalem District Court in June 1995.

It was the Bar-On fiasco that brought him unexpectedly back into the public sphere. When it became clear to all concerned that what was needed for attorney-general was nothing less than a righteous man, heads turned instinctively towards Elyakim Rubinstein.

The powers-that-be had wanted a back-slapping party man as their guardian of the gates of justice. What they have ended up with, heaven help them, is the closest thing in Israeli public life to a saint.

## Role model

Asked in an interview 10 years ago who he had wanted, as a child, to grow up to be like, Elyakim Rubinstein replied "Abba Eban."

What personages from history would he have liked to meet? "The Hafez, Haim, Ben-Gurion, Lincoln and Jefferson."

What would he like to be? "A judge. God willing."

What helps you concentrate? "Pressure."

What relaxes you? "The Sabbath."

What angers you? "Coarseness, deceit, lack of integrity."

A.R.

## Netanyahu's US backers suspend judgment

By HILLEL KUTTLER in Washington

Kenneth Bialkin was in Israel two weeks ago when it hit him that more of those at the table than not were under, or facing, indictment.

A former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Bialkin said he doesn't know whether the Bar-On affair might have a fallout on Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu because it is "part of a political process of charges or whether it's something more serious."

"The nature of that [Israeli] political environment is highly partisan. Politics there is a terribly dangerous game."

The hutzpa of it all — in the same week as President Clinton is under assault for inviting big donors to the Democratic National Committee to sleep in the White House's Lincoln Bedroom. That is the first major scandal to hit Clinton since, oh, the still-playing Whitewater.

On the Bar-On scandal, Netanyahu's backers here fall into two camps: Those who say he

didn't do anything wrong, and those who say it's too early to judge, but that he didn't do anything wrong.

Hart Hasten of Indianapolis said he feared the accusations would distract Netanyahu from the priorities of office.

"The so-called scandal I'm sure will pass. Of course it concerns me because we're taking away a lot of valuable time. It's destructive," said Hasten, a banker and philanthropist who once served as president of Herut Zionists of America and has known Netanyahu since the early 1980s.

"Whether it's the Lavon affair or other scandals, it's not productive. I thought Jews were too smart to be involved in all these scandals.... You can be the prime minister or the president and someone will always find something."

Jack B. Dweck, president of American Friends of Likud, stated that the Bar-On matter is "not playing" among the 30 officers of his organization.

"We don't believe he'll be implicated whatsoever or for that matter be indicted," said Dweck. "We just view it as an opposition effort to discredit and divide. We know how the campaign was run,

we know how [Netanyahu] runs his affairs.

"It's ridiculous. It's absurd. It's not being taken seriously [here] at all."

Bialkin stated that it is too early for him to form an opinion on what the Bar-On affair might mean for Netanyahu's standing among his American supporters.

"At the moment, all there are, are various allusions," he said. "Whether we are supporters of his or not, we all regret the troubles, if you will, that are complicating his administration. At the moment, all one can do is wait and see."

"It is disappointing to have a situation of this kind but one can't make a judgment."

Those interviewed say they are not involved in raising money for Netanyahu or the Likud party.

The Clinton administration believes the matter is snowballing just as Netanyahu has been burnishing his credentials as a peacemaker. But it wouldn't touch speculation on the Bar-On matter with the proverbial ten-foot pole.

"I would hesitate to guess what'll happen. I'm steering away from that," said a senior State Department official.

## The gray area between law and ethics

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

It is not quite All the Prime Minister's Men. Not yet, anyway. But even if the Bar-On Affair does not convert Nixon-like into The Fall of the House of Bibi, political legal experts are already treating it as an extremely prominent landmark of dysfunction in the governance of the State of Israel.

That is so whether or not the police come up with enough evidence to press charges against any of those involved. Binyamin Netanyahu's government may not fall, but it will not emerge unshaken or untainted.

Professor Ze'ev Segal, of Tel Aviv University and a legal commentator for *Ha'aretz*, says there is a gray area of legal responsibility set against the black area of ethics and public responsibility.

"The loftier the position of the civil servant the more strictly he is required, in the line of his duty, to preserve high moral standards and appropriate behavior," said Segal,

quoting an opinion written by Justice Yitzhak Zamir.

In the criminal domain, says Segal, questions may be raised about the line drawn between public moral responsibility and criminal responsibility.

At present, the scenarios being bandied about for the progress of the Bar-On scandal boil down to three main ones. The worst case would be that the investigation finds hard evidence indicating that the prime minister and other senior figures in his administration committed the criminal act of breach of trust, requiring charges to be pressed against them. As a consequence, the government resigns and new elections take place.

A more likely outcome in the view of some experts is that the investigation concludes Netanyahu committed no offense under criminal law, but his conduct in the affair is highly questionable from the standpoint of the moral norms of public office.

The third possibility is that the

prime minister is fully exonerated from even a suspicion of any wrongdoing.

By far the most resolute seeker of truth from the outset was State Prosecutor Edna Arbel who, ironically, was also acting attorney general at the time. Four days after Channel 1 television courageously decided to go with Ayala Hasson's sensational scoop of January 26, alleging that Shas leader Aryeh Deri did a deal over supporting the Hebron evacuation in exchange for a Deri-friendly attorney-general, Arbel ordered an investigation into "the apparent suspicions" raised by the broadcast.

Segal said Arbel's resoluteness in pushing the inquiry without even the preliminary stage of "examination" showed, at the very

least, that what was so glibly dismissed as "gibberish" by the prime minister was in fact a serious matter justifying criminal examination.

Segal concedes the general principle that not every action by politicians "which may seem unworthy to the public eye necessarily qualifies for a criminal breach-of-trust charge. Only that which falls into the 'black' area of severely damaging public trust in public service is a breach of trust which requires the attention of criminal law," he said.

The seniority of people involved and the responsibility of positions they hold could, however, give certain acts a corrupt character which puts them in the domain of criminal law, explains Segal.

Continued on Page 18

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THE JERUSALEM POST

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# There'll never be another ewe?

First, scientists produced clones of carrots, insects and mice. Now it's sheep. Will humans be next?  
Judy Siegel-Itzkovich reports

A healthy, pink-nosed sheep named Dolly - born seven months ago at a research institute near Edinburgh - has catapulted mankind into the realms of science fiction.

Aldous Huxley described such an eventuality in his *Brave New World*, and Mary Shelley wrote about Frankenstein's monsters. Then there was Ira Levin, who thought the unthinkable with his fictional book, *The Boys from Brazil*, about the cloning of Adolf Hitler.

And nearly two decades ago, journalist David Rorvik shocked the world with his "true story" of a billionaire's attempts to produce a clone of himself.

But Dolly, a carbon copy of its mother and derived from a ewe's egg cell and a mammary-gland cell from a second ewe (hence her being named for the voluptuous country and western singer Dolly Parton), is real. The Pandora's box opened by this development, and

week's *Nature* caused stock prices of PPL, which filed a patent for the process, to skyrocket.

"The thing is, there are enormous benefits... Nuclear weapons are much more dangerous than this," he said. "We're simply not interested in working with human material, and we think it would be ethically irresponsible to do so."

The potential applications of this breakthrough are both positive (in agriculture and pharmaceuticals) and mind-boggling (the cloning of humans).

Imagine a rich old man who wants to leave his fortune to no one - except a baby cloned from one of his cells. Or a couple who lost a child to an accident, disease or a war who order another - identical - child with the same genes.

Or people with fatal diseases having themselves cloned for body parts to serve as rejection-free transplant organs. Or a woman whose father died ordering an identical embryo from his cells that would be implanted in her uterus and that she would deliver. Or dictators like Gaddafi or Saddam Hussein making endless copies of themselves to run their countries after their death or of hefty, ruthless soldiers to form an offensive army.

Alarmed by such scenarios, President Bill Clinton instructed the US National Bioethics Advisory Panel to examine the legal and ethical implications of the discovery and to report back to him in 90 days. The Vatican issued a statement denouncing the idea of human cloning.

The winner of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize, nuclear physicist-turned nuclear-weapons opponent Joseph Rotblat, claimed Wilmut's discovery was as earth-shattering and potentially dangerous as the atom bomb. He argued that politicians "simply don't understand science well enough" to regulate it.

"My worry is that other advances in human science may lead to other means of mass destruction more readily available than nuclear weapons," he told BBC Radio. Richard Nicholson, editor of the *Bulletin of Medical Ethics* in



Dolly, the world's first clone of an adult mammal, at home in Scotland.

technological man."

Rabbi Yigal Shafan, a Jewish medical ethics specialist and a currently a member of the Supreme Helsinki Committee, said, "Jewish law does not specifically rule out human cloning if it is beneficial to health and medicine, but the spirit of Halacha opposes speculations of this kind and requires great caution."

HOW DID the Scots do it? An embryo is normally produced when a sperm impregnates an ovum. But Wilmut's team took unfertilized cells from an adult female sheep and removed all of their DNA, leaving behind nearly hollow cells containing vital materials needed to promote the growth of an embryo. They injected genes taken from a single cell taken from the udder of another female sheep.

Jump-starting cell division with a spark of electricity, the researchers found that the egg cell had multiplied in a petri dish and produced an embryo. This was implanted in the uterus of a surrogate mother sheep.

The first to be born was Dolly - who is genetically identical to the biological mother whose mammary DNA had been taken. Six younger clones were born later.

They weren't the first carbon copies of living things to be produced.

Scientists began some years ago producing clones of carrots, insects and even mice. They didn't get far with frogs, as the tadpole clones died before maturing. Identical animal twins have been produced by splitting embryonic cells, but since one couldn't know exactly what characteristics they would have as adults, this technique was useless in producing suitable clones.

An embryo's DNA is not identical to that in a fully matured creature, as it changes during the growth period. A muscle cell in a mammal, for example, has DNA sections that are not needed for making body parts excluding muscle. Scientists have long debated whether these DNA sections are just put "in hibernation" or actually shut down permanently. Wilmut and his colleagues, however, proved that the shutdown was only temporary, and that the cells could be reawakened like Sleeping Beauty to divide again.

Nevertheless, the process is neither easy nor foolproof. The Scottish team went through nearly 300 sheep embryos before it was able to produce one healthy adult animal; the rest died or were misshapen.

Nearly all agree that the potential benefits from animal cloning would be significant: genetically engineered pigs could be cloned to supply transplant organs; and the best milk- and meat-producing cows could be cloned from a single ancestor.

In addition, identical sheep could serve as living factories for the production of life-saving drugs - PPL

is already in the last stages of testing sheep whose milk contains a human protein for treating the genetic disease cystic fibrosis, and another medication whose cost would be drastically reduced potential uses is tPA, which dissolves clots after a heart attack. But, of course, the possibility of human cloning is the main worry.

Prof. Adam Friedmann of the Hebrew University's genetics department says he wasn't surprised by the attempt to clone sheep, but was astonished by the fact that it succeeded. "The amazing thing is that they managed to take a mature animal's cell, which had already differentiated, and return it to an embryonic state. They showed an adult cell is not a dead end," said Friedmann, who is also director of the unit for development of molecular biology and genetic engineering at Hadassah-University Hospital on Jerusalem's Mt. Scopus.

Friedmann cautions that genetic copies of humans would not be exactly identical adults. "There are significant environmental influences - how such clone babies would be raised, what schools they would attend, what chemicals they would be exposed to," he says.

He doesn't think the jump from cloning Dolly to cloning human embryos will be very difficult. "I'm in favor of techniques like animal

**"What if Gaddafi got his hands on human-cloning technology?"**

cloning that would improve and benefit society, but definitely not human cloning, which would change human characteristics. This could lead to the manufacture of human beings according to their characteristics. This would be pure racism.

"Aside from the major ethical issues, cloning would involve the unnatural reorganization of the human genome. The natural shuffling around of genes in offspring produced by sexual reproduction has a very important biological function. And cloning in effect makes males superfluous."

FRIEDMANN THINKS the UN would be one proper forum for scientists, philosophers, ethicists, religious leaders and government officials to discuss the brave new world opened by Wilmut's discovery. "The demon is out of the bottle and it could be terrible, but it must be discussed."

Prof. Steinberg, the medical ethicist, notes the risk of what non-Western "outlaw countries" like Libya or Iraq, which don't abide by international rules, might do. They could purchase the technology and hire scientists to clone humans. Steinberg doesn't rule out ever using the cloning technique for animals, but he urges world leaders and scientists to convene a forum and think carefully about halting even that.

"Things move very quickly. Less than 20 years ago, Louise Brown became the first baby produced by in-vitro fertilization. Look what has happened since then: middle-aged women have served as surrogates and given birth to their own grandchildren. Once a discovery is put onto the Internet, in seconds scientists around the world know about it. Let's put a brake on all cloning and think. Maybe in five years, we'll think otherwise."

Science Ministry director-general Zvi Yarnai endorses the idea of an international gathering.

"What if Gaddafi got his hands on human-cloning technology: it's not like a nuclear reactor that could easily be detected using satellites, and it wouldn't take a lot of money or advanced equipment. It would be very difficult to stop abuse."

Nearly 25 years ago, a scientist named Paul Berg who received a Nobel Prize for his work on the SV-40 virus, realized that it could escape into the sewage lines and harm mankind. A conference held in Europe that he initiated set down strict rules, including using only attenuated microorganisms that couldn't survive outside the lab.

Such a conference, suggests Yarnai, could be held again. "The initiative doesn't necessarily have to come from governments: it's a problem of the entire society. There is still no reason to panic. Let's digest the news about this discovery. I'm sure there will be initiatives on dealing with it."

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**Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron says there is no halachic prohibition against cloning.**

the genuine possibility that it could be used to clone unlimited copies of human beings, have shaken up scientists, ethicists, government officials and the general public around the world.

Many have tried to push genetics so far, but only a team headed by Ian Wilmut and Keith Campbell of the Roslin Institute in Midlothian, Scotland - with backing from the private biotechnology company PPL Therapeutics - succeeded. "I do believe we are a pretty moral species," said Wilmut, whose article published in last

London, sighed: "I would have preferred never to have seen it happen."

An opinion survey taken in the US immediately after the news broke, found that half of those queried opposed the research, but 53 percent nevertheless said animals could be cloned if this would benefit mankind. Over 80% said that cloning humans would be morally objectionable - and 6 percent said they themselves would like to be cloned.

And in Israel, molecular biologists and geneticists - while impressed by the scientific achievement - were worried about the ramifications of the discovery.

"The problem," says Prof. Avraham Steinberg, a pediatric neurologist who teaches medical ethics at the Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Medicine, "is the slippery slope. It may begin with benefits to mankind, but how can you stop the slide into chaos and immorality?"

The chief researcher at the Volcani Institute for Agricultural Research at Beit Dagan said there was "no reason" not to clone animals if it were done with strict limitations and regulations. The Health Ministry said there are no detailed regulations limiting genetic engineering of humans and animals, and these may be considered in the

future. In the meantime, no human cloning experiments could be carried out without receiving permission from the Supreme Helsinki Committee on Human Experimentation.

The two chief rabbis seemed to disagree: completely. Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron was quoted in *Ha'aretz* as saying that there was no halachic prohibition against cloning either animals or humans. What was forbidden was integrating two different types of species.

But Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, who was previously a member of the Supreme Helsinki Committee on Human Experimentation, declared: "The potential of cloning human beings is frightening because it makes possible intentional selection of human beings and to manufacture a

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## AGAINST THE GRAIN



By HILLEL HALKIN

## Indigenous to a strange land

For the past two weeks I followed the news from home via the foreign-language press of an Arab land, where I was on vacation.

The space given to Israel was extensive, devoted almost entirely to the peace process, and reasonably, if not totally, objective. It presented the reader with a picture of a country seriously addressing the fateful choices that it must make in the coming months and years regarding its borders and its relations with its neighbors.

It was only upon picking up a Hebrew newspaper a few hours after being back here that I realized that the Arabs were out of touch. What really concerned Israelis while I was away was not the future of Jerusalem or of the Golan Heights, but whether it was Tzahi Hanegbi who first mentioned the name of Roni Bar-On to Binyamin Netanyahu or vice versa.

I tried imagining an Arab on his first visit to Israel. What, I wondered, would amaze him more about the Jewish state that he had until now only read about? The fact that it is so fanatically law-abiding that its prime minister has to submit, like any suspected criminal, to a legal investigation of a government appointment made by him? Or the fact that it is so politically incompetent that, like a quarreling family that cannot settle its own affairs, it is forced to call in the police to resolve a government scandal that seems to have more to do with moral obtuseness and plain stupidity than with anything else?

But why try to imagine oneself as an Arab? It's hard enough to think of it all as a Jew.

On the one hand, it is impressive. Even in the United States, which so often serves us as a democratic model to be emulated, no president has ever had to undergo the police grilling that Prime Minister Netanyahu underwent this week as a matter of

course — not Nixon over Watergate, not Reagan over Irangate, not Clinton over Whitewater. If an ultimate test of a democracy is its readiness to make its highest officials accountable to the law as its most ordinary citizens, Israel is now at the top of its class.

On the other hand, it is bizarre. For weeks now, basted to the scene by an undocumented television scoop, the Israeli police have been interrogating cabinet ministers, supreme court justices, and high government aides about a political decision made by the prime minister while the entire country looks on with unprotesting fascination — as if this were the most natural of spheres for a police force to operate in.

One thing should be obvious, even if at the moment, amid the spate of rumors and speculations, it does not seem to be. As crass and foolish as Prime Minister Netanyahu's short-lived choice of a jurisprudentially undistinguished Likud loyalist for one of the country's highest legal posts may have been, this choice was criminal only if one very specific thing about it can be proved — namely, that it was part of a deal made by Netanyahu and/or his associates with Shas leader Aryeh Deri, the terms of which were that, in return for Shas support for the prime minister in the Knesset, Bar-On would get Deri off the hook of the legal charges that he is now standing trial for.

Needless to say, if this turns out to be the case, not only does the present government deserve to fall, but all those who were implicated in the deal, up to and including the prime minister, deserve to stand trial themselves for an attempted subversion of justice.

And yet without professing to have the vaguest idea about what actually went on in the back rooms, I must say that there is something inherently implausible about such a scenario — if only because Deri had to know that Bar-On could not have delivered on the bargain.

After all, Deri's trial has been under way for several years,

and there is no way in which even the most unscrupulous of government legal advisers can now intervene in it or affect its outcome; while if the suspicion is that Deri was promised a governmental pardon after being convicted, the granting of such clemency is not within the legal adviser's jurisdiction either.

This is not to say, of course, that Deri may not have wanted Bar-On as the government's legal adviser for a number of conceivable reasons, or that a Deri-Netanyahu or Deri-Hanegbi deal concerning Bar-On was not struck, or that, given Deri's legal situation, allowing him any say at all on the matter was not politically and morally disgraceful. It is simply to point out that, unless there is concrete evidence of an explicit quid pro quo linking Deri's trial with the Bar-On appointment, a hurried and sensational police investigation was unwarranted.

It has been suggested that even if Prime Minister Netanyahu and others in the government were not part of a clear-cut criminal conspiracy, they might be legally prosecutable for "breach of faith" with the public in having knowingly appointed, for purposes of political gain, an unscrupulous figure like Bar-On to a high government post. But this is absurd. If we were to start prosecuting every politician who has in one capacity or another failed to act in good faith towards the public, if only by cynically winking on his campaign promises, the entire political system, not only of this country, but of every democracy in the world, would be behind bars.

Democratic politics is a dirty if necessary business involving many dirty and not always necessary deals. And although the battle to keep it as clean as possible is never-ending, expecting the legal system to fight it for us, as Israeli society is increasingly tending to do, is an abdication of political responsibility.

Political standards can in the long run be enforced only by politics themselves; in all but the most unambiguously criminal cases, calling in the police is the wrong way to go about it.

## Dry Bones



## FUNDS



By BEVERLY BLACK

Special thanks to everyone who has made donations honoring the memory of the 73 fallen soldiers and expressed condolences to their families.

We will be moving back to the main building in Romea next week and are of course quite busy packing and preparing for the move. We can be reached by mobile phone (050-522134) or messages can be left at the switchboard telephone: (02) 531-5666, or fax: (02) 531-5622.

We are still accepting donations and processing them, so keep them coming! Keep us busy!

What more can we say, except send you checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000.

Donors in the United States wishing to receive tax benefits, can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 211 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate.

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NIS 500 in Ori's memory — Marisa and Hugo Maron, Tel Aviv, Anon., Ra'anana.

NIS 300 in honor of Yehoshua Wilko's 85th birthday — Dorothy and Leonard Birbach.

NIS 200 in fondest remembrance of Zvi — Eric.

NIS 180 To Florence R. Strin on her 94th birthday — loving wishes for good health — from the family in Israel.

NIS 160 in honor of Dana and Avram's engagement — June Sumner, I'm.

NIS 36 in memory of beloved stepmother, Ida Shapiro and precious dear father, Morris Schwartz — Celia Schwartz, I'm.

NIS 20 in memory of the air crash victims — C.E.E. Hain.

\$950 God bless you all — Benji Mallory, Ra'anana.

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\$180 in honor of Leonard I. Kuzin's 82nd birthday — Judy Katzin and David Kaplan, Ra'anana.

\$116 in memory of our beloved son, Hillel Isaac Maisei — Rachel and Harry Maisei, W. Bloomfield, MI.

\$100 in memory of Rabbi Finklin with condolences to Dr. and Mrs. Eliezer Finklin and their family — The Moser family, Staten Island, NY.

\$36 in memory of our mother, Elena Buchs B. on her birthday, February 26 — Vanessa Weichsel, Mexico; in memory of our mother, Tilla Weichsel, on her birthday, February 22, Werner Weichsel, Mexico.

\$23 Mr. Arnold Feinberg, Minneapolis, MN.

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\$180 in honor of the birth of Chaim Simcha Weinberg — Judy Katzin and David Kaplan, Ra'anana.

\$60 in memory of the victims of the helicopter crash, prayers for their families — Haim Hosen, Phoenix, AZ.

\$36 From the Hebrew School children of Congregation Kfar Yisrael of the South Shore, Stoughton, MA.

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WELCOME HOME FUND

NIS 500 in Ori's memory — Marisa and Hugo Maron, Tel Aviv.

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NIS 75 in memory of my nephew, Seymour Davidson of Greensboro, NC — Sonya Kamenetz, Tel Aviv.

NIS 30 in memory of the air crash victims — C.E.E. Hain.

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\$300 Doug, Carolyn and Jonathan Shiley, Herndon, VA.

\$180 in honor of all the new immigrant students from Ethiopia — Judy Katzin and David Kaplan, Ra'anana.

\$118 in memory of our beloved son, Hillel Isaac Maisei — Rachel and Harry Maisei, W. Bloomfield, MI.

\$25 Edward Hyder, Columbia, SC.

\$20 For the precious young soldiers who were killed recently and their families — Mae Carol Brown Berryhill, Booneville, MS.

\$18 in memory of Shmuel Baruch — Dr. William and Mrs. Marilyn Stein, Gaithersburg, MD.

New Donations: NIS 705; Progress Totals: NIS 4,169; NIS 31,011.

## A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

The 76-year Arab-Jewish War, the bloody part of the century-long Arab struggle to prevent the reestablishment of the Jewish sovereign presence in Eretz Yisrael, and then, when it was established, to liquidate it, has taken three main victims.

First among the victims — in the number of human beings killed and maimed, in the misery caused to hundreds of thousands of individuals and myriads of families — are the Arabs themselves, especially those who latterly have been calling themselves Palestinians.

And the overwhelming majority of those victims — the dead, the wounded, the displaced — were victimized by their fellow Arabs and fellow "Palestinians."

Then, of course, there are the Jewish casualties — those slain or wounded while bearing arms against those coming to slay them, and the defenseless children, women and men felled by terrorists as they rode the buses, drove their cars, flew in the airplanes, strolled in the streets, or slept in their beds. Along with these defenseless Jewish victims, more than a few defenseless non-Jews, including Arabs, were slain by Arab terrorists and their collaborators.

The third victim is the truth itself. "Palestinian" spokesmen and their collaborators turned the truth into a helpless cripple, incapable of playing the role it ought to have played and ought

still to play as arbiter in this conflict, and, indeed, in all human relations.

There are several ways of victimizing the truth. One is by the outright, bald lie.

For example, in an interview with IMRA/Independent Media Review & Analysis earlier this month, Yasser Arafat's lieutenant, Mahmoud Abbas ("Abu Mazen"), said that "under UN [Security Council] Resolution 242 Israel is to withdraw from all occupied territory."

That resolution says no such thing. It does call for Israel's "withdrawal from territories occupied" in the June 1967 Six Day War. There is no "all" or "the" in the official, binding text, in English.

Abbas also told IMRA that "everyone knows that we have already amended the [PLO] Covenant..."

Many say so, but nobody "knows" it, because it isn't so. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright didn't "know" it when she told the House Foreign Affairs Committee that the US attaches great importance to the "Palestinian Authority's" fulfillment of its obligations under the Oslo Accords, including amending the covenant to delete the vicious anti-Jewish passages (Ha'aretz, February 14).

Furthermore, the famous "Note for the Record" US Special Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross gave Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and PA chairman Yasser Arafat after their January 15 meeting clearly calls on "the Palestinian side" to "complete the process of revising the Palestinian

National Charter."

Then there is the continuous rewriting of Jerusalem's history by PLO propagandist Walid M. Awad, to whose lies I have pointed in the past.

For Awad, Jerusalem's history has no Abraham, no David, no Solomon, no Herod. He tells the PA's Web site: "Any reading of the history of Jerusalem shows that the city took the bulk of its shape, its divine character and historical ambience" following the capture of the city by caliph Omar in 639.

The only true fact in that statement concerns the "bulk" of the Old City's "shape," which was determined by the architects of the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent nearly five centuries ago.

"The fact is," Awad continues to spin his cock-and-bull yarn, "that almost 30 years of excavations did not reveal anything Jewish, no tangible evidence of their was unearthed..."

This is a bald lie. Things Jewish and tangible evidence of ours have indeed been unearthed, harking back as far as the First Temple period. Not many things, thanks to all of the city's burners and plunderers from the Babylonian Nebuzaradan on.

Another Awadism: "Jerusalem is not a Jewish city, despite the biblical myth implanted in some minds."

A "myth" that mentions "Jerusalem" 657 times and "Zion," one of the city's many bynames, 152 times — and nary a mention in Islam's Koran.

Awad is most likely also the author of the package of lies distributed to Christian pilgrims in

Bethlehem last Christmas.

For example, in a discussion of the Western Wall, which the PLO usurpers call "Al Baraq Wall," after the legendary horse on which a later Moslem tradition tells as Mohammed flew from Mecca to Jerusalem and from here to Heaven, the pilgrims are told that "...some Orthodox Jews consider [it] as a holy place for them, and claim that the wall is part of their temple, which all historic studies and archeological excavations have failed to find proof for such a claim."

These are just a few samples of the farrago of nonsense our alleged peace partners are peddling as "history."

"Kalam fadi! Baloney!" I say to Walid Awad and his fellow revisionist historians.

THERE ARE other, more insidious kinds of lies besides the blatant-untruth kind. These are the appeals to the emotions of the uninformed by telling half-truths, by omitting or rearranging facts, by speciously equating unequals.

Sometimes the story contains all those elements.

Sometimes it is told in the name of justice, even, in our instance, in the name of Patriarch Abraham, as we find in the December 21 New York Times full-page advertisement captioned, "Christians call for a shared Jerusalem," the city that is equally "sacred ... to Jews, Christians and Moslems, the Children of Abraham."

The "call" is undersigned by representatives of several score American church institutions of

many denominations, and several hundred individuals. None are known to have protested against the demolition or desecration of synagogues and other Jewish holy sites in the Jordan-occupied sector of Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967, or against Jordan's violation of the armistice agreement in denying Jews access to the Western Wall and other Jewish holy sites and institutions.

The signs call for "a negotiated solution that respects the human and political rights of both Palestinians and Israelis, as well as the rights of the Jews, Christians and Moslems in Jerusalem. They ignore several facts:

• Jerusalem is Jerusalem above all because of its Jewish — including its early-Christian — history.

• Eastern Jerusalem was never "traditionally Arab" except during the Jordanian occupation.

• The "Palestinians" never had, nor were they entitled to, any political rights in Jerusalem, which, with the encouragement of people like the ad's signers, they are now "reclaiming."

• Jerusalem never was a freer, more "shared" city for people of all nations and religions than it was after the entire city came under Israeli rule in 1967 — until the "Palestinians" and their abettors decided it was time to revise the city's history, derail its present, and reroute its future.

(Thanks to Dr. Aaron Lerner of Ra'anana, codirector of IMRA, and Prof. Ailon Shiloah of Jerusalem.)

## Defining the rabbi's job



By SHLOMO RISKIN

"And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for honor and for beauty." (Ex. 28:2)

What is the real function of the community rabbi? Is he primarily a representative of God, ready to deliver the divine message to anyone who wishes to receive it? Or is he a representative of the nation, duty-bound to make the people fertile for the planting of the divine seed?

A similar debate takes place in the Talmud, which asks whether the priests are agents of God or agents of Israel. The answer has many ramifications for rabbinic search committees and seminary curricula.

Tetzaveh is devoted to the priesthood; the first half of the portion describes the special garments they were to wear. Of the eight garments specifically prepared for the high priest, two stand out: the breastplate and the gold headband. The breastplate consisted of 12 stones, each inscribed with the name of a tribe

of Israel. The gold plate around his forehead featured the words "Holy to God," establishing the priest's fealty to the divine.

Hence these two garments answer our question concerning the real function of a religious leader. The religious leadership of Israel must never lose sight either of God or of the nation. It is the task of the rabbi to bring God to the Jewish people, and the Jewish nation to God.

But we must remember that until the middle of the 18th century, the overwhelming majority of Jews were observant. Indeed, anyone identified as a Jew automatically frequented the synagogue daily, kept the Sabbath and festivals holy and ate only kosher food. Hence, an individual expert in Jewish law was critical for the functioning of the community.

But then the ghetto walls began to crumble. Emancipation took place, and the secular Jew was born. In throwing off the yoke of Judaism he also felt the need to attack age-old traditions.

To defend itself, Judaism's old guard took two basic approaches. The first was a deeper retreat into the old ways. For centuries, the "rabbi" had emerged naturally by virtue of his preeminent knowledge and piety. He had received

ordination from his teacher — but his acceptance by the community was a foregone conclusion based on his scholarship. In those days — and still very much so in Israel — a rabbi would only give two public lectures a year — on Shabbat Shuva and Shabbat Hagadol. Perhaps he taught several close students. Pastoral obligations such as visiting the sick, comforting the mourners and establishing religio-social meetings were not his province.

The rabbi was trained only in Torah; he was not expected to be conversant in pastoral psychology, social work, group dynamics, homiletics or informal pedagogy. He was not even expected to be involved in outreach or engagement; those who wished his expertise were expected to come to him.

In Eastern Europe, this traditional method of rabbinic training and function was not to be changed by one iota. In the words of the Hasidic Rosh, "new things" (hadash, literally referring to new grain) are biblically forbidden.

The second approach was to confront the spiritual ravages wrought by the Reform movement in Germany. By the middle of the 19th century, Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer, a widely respected

Talmudic scholar, had created a rabbinical seminary where students would be trained to serve as a bridge between the religious and the secular. They would study not only Talmud, Bible and Halacha, but also university subjects that would gain them the respect of the entire Jewish community.

In 1934, the head of Hildesheimer's, Rabbi Yehiel Ya'akov Weinberg, a Talmudic scholar who had also acquired his doctorate, felt the winds of German antisemitism rising. He wanted to transfer the rabbinical seminary to Palestine. The rabbis of Jerusalem were against the move. A rabbinical seminary with university courses might be acceptable in Germany, but the old Yishuv of Jerusalem could not allow such a departure from traditionalism.

Who knows what Israel would be like if Hildesheimer's had been allowed to move to Jerusalem? Its graduates might have been able to speak to the early pioneers who had little interest in religion.

And what of the state of religion in Israel today? Several years back, a study made by the Louis Guttmann Israel Institute of Applied Social Research,

requested by the Avi Chai Foundation, revealed the common perception of Israel as a society verging on civil war between the religious and the secular as a misrepresentation of the facts.

Indeed, Israeli society expresses not so much a religious divide as a religious continuum. Fourteen percent observe the commandments completely, 24 percent to a great extent, 41 percent to a lesser extent, and only 21 percent do not observe at all. Most remarkable, one-third of the nation wants to keep more ritual observances than their parents, and only 5 percent want to keep fewer.

Equally significant, however, is the fact that only 8 percent of Israelis attend synagogue daily, and only 16 percent attend each Sabbath and festival. Israel is a culturally Jewish society, where as Diaspora Jewry is more synagogue oriented. Nevertheless, secularism has clearly encroached in both places. The challenge is in providing the kind of spiritual leadership which can turn our synagogues in Israel into the houses of prayer, study and social betterment which they have been throughout our history.

Shabbat Shalom

Dr. Yehiel



## GRAPEVINE

## An Ofer they couldn't refuse

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

When B'nai B'rith International was discussing who should be the 18th recipient of its humanitarian award, the name that kept coming up was Yuli Ofer.

Government ministers Ariel Sharon, Rafael Eitan and Avigdor Kahalani were among some 500 people representing a broad swathe of society who responded to the invitation of BBI president Tommy P. Baer to join him this week at the Tel Aviv Hilton to celebrate Ofer's receipt of B'nai B'rith's highest accolade.

Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau declared that Ofer had reached the highest of the eight levels of charity defined by Maimonides by giving employment to literally thousands of people, thereby enabling them to support their families with dignity and honor.

NOT EVERYONE would go abroad to have a shave, but Petros Eftychiou, ambassador of Cyprus, actually went on home leave to get rid of his beard. The reason? His children are based in Cyprus and his nine-year-old daughter has never seen him without a beard. In order to spare her the psychological trauma of confronting a stranger claiming to be her father, he shaved his beard off in her presence.

Why did he get rid of it? A matter of vanity. The hair on his head



Appearing at a reception hosted by the Israel-Canada Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Eretz Israel Museum are (from left to right) Canadian Ambassador David Berger, Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo, Bank Hapoalim deputy managing director Avi Harel, Canadian International Trade Minister Arthur Eggleton, and Israel-Canada Chamber of Commerce president Yehuda Raveh.

is still dark but the beard was silver, and Eftychiou didn't want to look old. "It does make you look younger," pronounced a colleague on seeing his clean-shaven countenance. "You look about 50." It was hardly a diplomatic observation. Eftychiou is 46!

WHEN Canadian International Trade Minister Arthur Eggleton met Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo at a reception hosted by the Israel-Canada Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Eretz Israel Museum, the two had plenty to talk about.

Prior to entering national poli-



Yuli Ofer, with his wife Rutie, at the celebration for his receipt of B'nai B'rith's humanitarian award.

tics, Eggleton was mayor of Toronto for 11 years, and distinguished himself by being the longest serving mayor in the city's history. In addition he served on the Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission. Milo, before switching from national to local politics, served as police minister.

IN THE days when she was a professional caterer, Bessie Springson frequently prepared receptions for Golda Meir and other members of Israel's political echelon. But even after she retired from business, Springson, who will be 89 in March, found it difficult to stay out of the kitchen. She frequently donates the buffets for WIZO and Ezrat Nashim affairs. It was the latter organization which benefited this week at a luncheon hosted by Gertrude Harvey-Cohen.

Though most of the guests are themselves dab hands at the culinary arts, they admittedly admitted that they couldn't compete with Springson when it came to presentation. They were particularly impressed by her penguins made with hard-boiled eggs, black olives and sliced almonds for beaks.

AFFAIRS OF state got in the way of a meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Keren Hayesod leaders from around the world during his first half year in office, but the get-together finally took place last week.

If people such as Mendel Kaplan, former chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, Shlomo Hillel, Keren Hayesod World chairman, Julia Koschitzky, outgoing chairperson of Keren Hayesod's Board of Trustees, and other KH dignitaries were a little upset at having to wait in line behind Yasser Arafat, Hosni Mubarak and Bill Clinton, they were soon mollified by Netanyahu's suggestion that Keren Hayesod work together with the government in formulating Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations in Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora.

HE PROBABLY wasn't aware of his faux pas, but when Yonatan Ben-Ya'acov, head of the Education Ministry's immigrant absorption authority, addressed a seminar at which Russian immigrant women complained that they were being stereotyped as prostitutes, he developed foot-in-mouth disease. In an effort to encourage them to take heart from the wisdom of the women in the Bible, he recited off a short list in which he twice mentioned Rahab. While some biblical scholars give her the sole status of an innkeeper, there are others who describe her as a prostitute. This was one time when it might have been wiser to avoid the Bible.

IN HOLLYWOOD, where divorce is common, Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward really stand out in the crowd. The couple will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary next year.

GUESS WHO'S studying Kabbalah? Believe it or not, Madonna. Dressed somewhat more modestly than when she appears on stage or on camera, Madonna, who is into mysticism and spiritual enlightenment, is one of several non-Jews attending weekly classes in Los Angeles. Among the Jewish celebrity students: Roseanne Barr and Sandra Bernhard.

AT AGE 30, supermodel Cindy Crawford can still wait a while before worrying about her biological clock ticking over. But ex-husband Richard Gere didn't want any babies underfoot, nor did the subsequent men in her life until she met up with her current significant other, restaurateur Randy Gerber.

Now she has another problem. Gerber doesn't mind taking on paternity, but he does mind getting married.

## THE WEEK THAT WAS

## Keeping up with the Bar-On juggernaut

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

The Bar-On juggernaut trundles merrily onwards, crushing hapless bystanders under its relentless wheels. Channel 1's nightly news, *Mabat*, and Friday night's *Yoman* have become the only shows in town for keeping up with the scandal-wagon.

No self-respecting televiewer can afford to miss their prime channel fix. As things were this week, even the *Hatzofim* seem to be struggling to keep up. This is Channel 1's story as surely as Richard Nixon was *The Washington Post*.

And like the *Post*, the channel is enjoying the active cooperation of the rest of the media. It kept up the suspense at a rattling pace this week, making up in sub-plots and sidebars whatever the main narrative lacked in action.

The week began dramatically enough when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu retained the services of attorney Ya'acov Weinroth to represent him in the Bar-On investigation. Weinroth wasted no time getting his sleeves rolled up.

Within hours he was appearing on several television channels and radio programs – not as a defense attorney, but as a brilliant public-relations man and personal spokesman.

Weinroth's gun was triple-barreled and aimed at the police and state prosecutor, the opposition, and (need we say it) the media.

The energetic attorney swiftly cleared a line of defense around Netanyahu and made clear its outline.

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, until now the prime minister's blue-eyed boy, was responsible for the ill-conceived and abortive appointment of Roni Bar-On as attorney general. He misled the prime minister – not deliberately of course. Hanegbi simply hadn't understood – what? Supreme Court President Aharon Barak had said to him.

If Hanegbi is the dark villain in the plot, then Bibi is the innocent victim. "What could I do? Tzahi is my justice minister and I have to trust him," Netanyahu told his attorney.

The latter graciously volunteered some free advice to Hanegbi – get yourself a lawyer.

"When those under questioning begin blaming one another, it's a sure sign the investigation has succeeded," commented Minister Natan Sharansky, who, as a former Prisoner of Zion, is experienced at being interrogated.

Others put it another way – as long as everyone involved remained united in denying any knowledge of a deal in the Hebron/Dari/Bar-On affair, the police had nothing.

The first to crack under pressure was Netanyahu when he tossed the dirt in Hanegbi's direction. Some Likudniks muttered that if he hadn't panicked in the first place and demanded a police investigation, the whole affair might have blown over.

Hanegbi had no intention of taking this lying down, much less of "going gentle into that good night" of political limbo. Sources close to him did not hesitate to make it known that in any war for political survival, he would not "go down" alone.

On camera, Netanyahu and Hanegbi made valiant efforts, with much hale and hearty arm-patting and double-hand grasping, to show that not only was there no rift between them, but their buddiness was firm as ever.

Any other suggestion was a media invention. What else!

## MEDIA AS MESSAGE

"When I read some of the imaginary descriptions in the press about the [Bar-On] affair on what presumably happened in my office, I have to snigger, to put it in understatement," said Netanyahu.

This was a preamble to his renewed assault on the media. It began with his dismissal of the whole Bar-On affair as "complete gibberish," when Channel 1 first broke it.

The "gibberish" has since involved the prime minister himself, among many other prominent personages, being interrogated by the police after being cautioned and advised of their rights.

So OK, out with the "gibberish" defense and wheel in "the media are engaged in a putsch" and "disrupting democratic procedures" – the official line of the week.

Yes, that's official if it comes from a health minister and a Likud spokesman, as is Yehoshua

Matza, who used those terms to describe the reporters doing their job by exposing the shenanigans. He did so while elegantly belittling at the top of his voice on *Popolitika*, so no one could miss it. Journalist Tommy Lapid found himself, in the absence of other colleagues, single-handedly defending the public's right to know as show host Dan Margalit tried in vain to restrain Matza.

In Amman, Netanyahu complained before King Hussein at a news conference that journalists had flown "all the way there" to question him about a "domestic matter we have in Israel."

Maybe prime ministers should check their facts at least as well as journalists.

The Bar-On "domestic matter" is making headlines on all major world television networks, world print and radio media, in Arab states, and across the Internet. Oh yes, and it's big news in Jordan too, where newspapers have even designed "Bar-On" running logos for the stories – just like our Hebrew newspapers and *The Jerusalem Post*.

## HITTING THE FAN

As the Bar-On mess hits the fan, the debris is scattered in all directions. Some of the sidebars are fodder for thrillers of their own.

A senior minister this week said with certainty the police are recording the telephone conversations of cabinet ministers and



Netanyahu's defense attorney Ya'acov Weinroth aimed his triple-barreled gun at the police, opposition, and media.

(Brian Hendler)

even of the prime minister.

Hanegbi, for one, is taking special care of his conversations at home and in the car and office, just in case. Senior cabinet figures have taken to meeting in dark parking lots, for fear their offices are bugged.

It's eerily reminiscent of the "Deep Throat" scenes in the parking lot in *All the President's Men* – screened with calculated serendipity by Channel 2 on Wednesday night.

Rumors abounded of an inevitable cabinet reshuffle and Prime Minister's Office shakeup once the storm subsides.

Some heads being measured for the guillotine include Hanegbi's and Finance Minister Dan Meridor's.

The mild Meridor's crime would appear to be saying that if the allegations in the Bar-On affair are true, it is "the most serious scandal in the history of the state."

Another name banded about is the bureau almighty himself, Avigdor Lieberman. According to *Ma'ariv*'s sources, he is considering quitting his job to go into private business. Or was that "spending more time with the family"?

Pinhas Fishler, formerly the Prime Minister's Office chief, claims that the police asked him to collect material against Lieberman. A statement to this effect was issued to the press by the Prime Minister's Office this week.

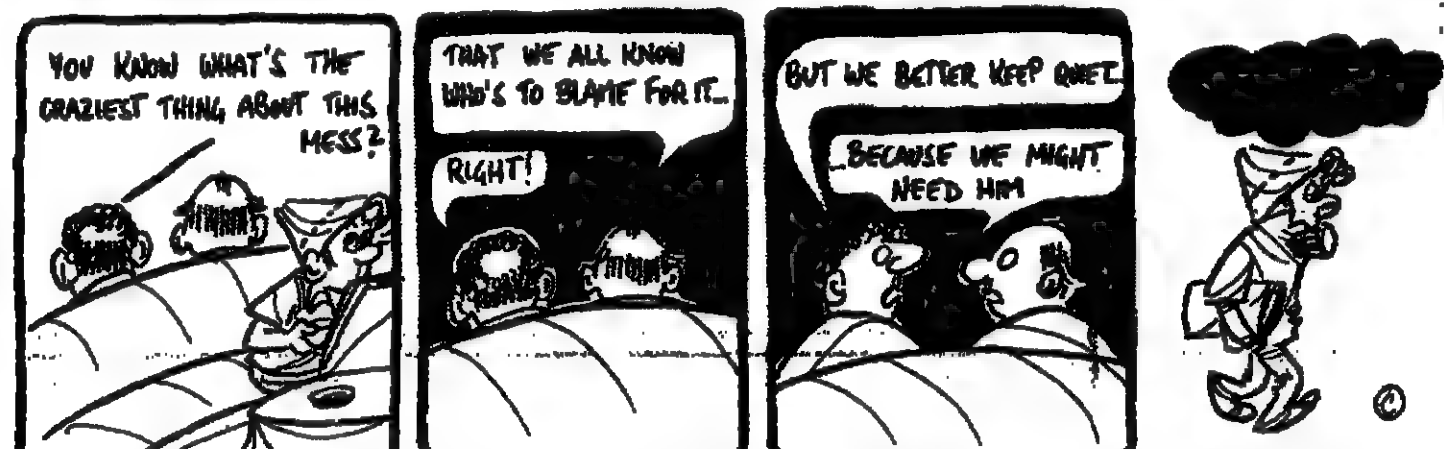
The police say Fishler, who was kicked out of the job by Lieberman, had approached them with an offer to provide information against Lieberman in exchange for police help in finding a public position. Since the police could not promise such a thing, he filed no complaint against Lieberman nor brought out any evidence.

In a final twist, police raided Bar-On's office and appropriated files. Bar-On himself trooped off to join the exclusive club of those questioned under caution – Netanyahu, Shas's Aryeh Deri, Lieberman and Likud mover-and-shaker David Appel.

If they were British, they would all be sporting Bar-On Club ties by now.

## SRULIK

by DOSH



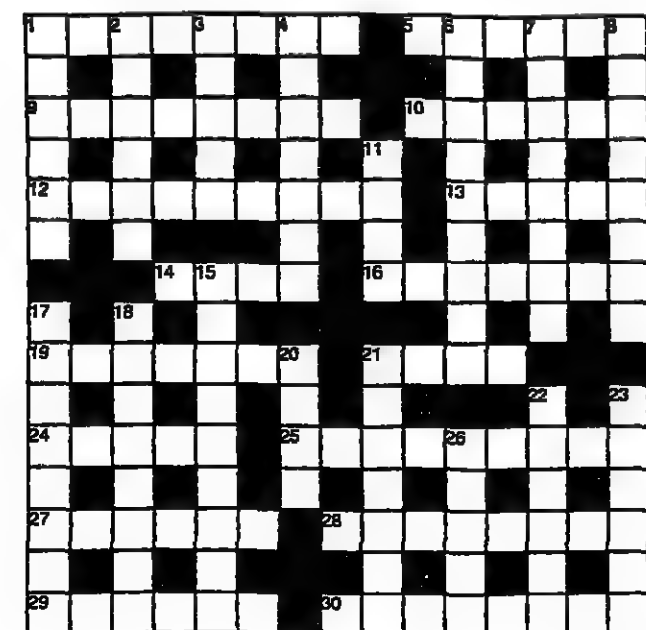
## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

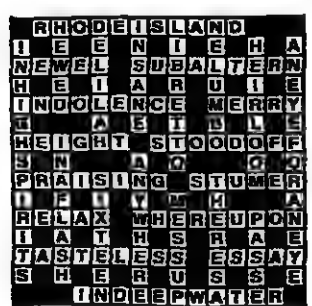
- 1 Start of a Haydn symphony (8)
- 5 It's a pain to sew (6)
- 9 Leaders of industry can't sip a cocktail (6)
- 10 Short answer to wicked crime in Anglo-Saxon kingdom (6)
- 12 Wind-damaged Hert's town (5-4)
- 13 Coach out and about in Turkey? (5)
- 14 Prophet found in Samaria, mostly (4)
- 16 Comfort at PM's home for so long (7)
- 19 Instrument of forged steel in odd keys (7)
- 21 Home fixture for City (4)

## DOWN

- 24 Machine for shaping bubbles endlessly (5)
- 25 London marathon still running (9)
- 27 Shed in Berkshire (6)
- 28 Church enclosed by rather fragile glass (8)
- 29 Son to stay behind to see what sky is like at night (6)
- 30 Quakers' sort of cordial? (8)
- 1 Two shakes of a lamb's tail may reveal a tick (6)
- 2 Bear football forward (6)
- 3 Arrive at open stretch of water on river (5)
- 4 Sunny start except when extremely cloudy? (7)
- 6 Handling medicine (9)



## SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution  
ACROSS: 1 Tusk, 4 Tiller, 7 Elm, 9 Spur, 10 Mackerel, 11 Mop, 12 Taps, 13 Tallying, 16 Finishing-post, 19 Backlash, 23 Neap, 24 Ass, 25 Eyebrow, 26 Take, 27 Eve, 28 Abbeys, 30 Soda.  
DOWN: 2 Approximated, 3 Terminal, 4 Tempt, 5 Local, 6 Elegy, 8 Tennis racket, 14 Altus, 15 Log, 17 Set, 18 Punster, 20 Kebab, 21 Albino, 22 Hades.

## QUICK CROSSWORD

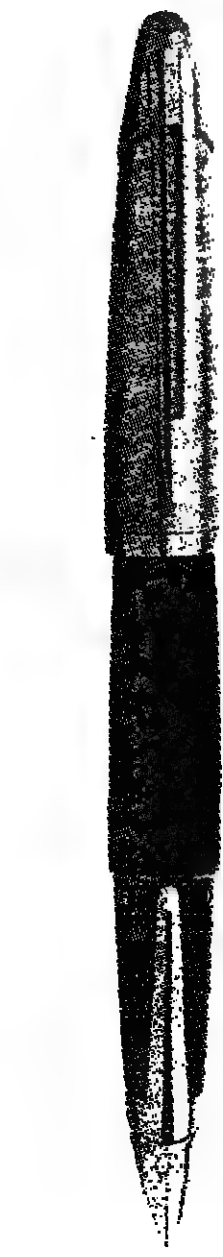
## ACROSS

- 1 Vespucci, Florentine navigator (7)
- 5 Ball-shaped (5)
- 8 Puccini opera (5)
- 9 Frenzied (7)
- 10 Discipline, curb (7)
- 11 Vast crowd (5)
- 12 Light wind (6)
- 14 Way out (5)
- 17 Roman conspirator (5)
- 19 Fit of temper (7)
- 22 Robin's green? (7)
- 23 Ethical (5)
- 24 Conjecture (5)
- 25 Belly (7)

## DOWN

- 1 High room (5)
- 2 Subjugate (7)
- 3 Ill-suited (5)
- 4 Hint someone's feelings (6)
- 5 Selfish driver (4,3)
- 6 State, express (6)
- 7 Wife of duke (7)
- 12 Accumulation of uncompleted work (7)
- 13 Enthusiastic (7)
- 15 Tympanic membrane (7)
- 16 Unit of a poem (6)
- 18 Burn superficially (5)
- 20 Wanderer (5)
- 21 Fruit (5)

L'expression personnelle



WATERMAN



Handwritten text in Arabic script.



Friday,  
February 28, 1997

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

19

13

## BITS & BYTES

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

**Clockwork Group receives NIS 250,000 order:** The Clockwork Group of Herzliya recently announced that the Royal Netherlands Air Force has ordered NIS 250,000-worth of the company's resource optimization software. The SPAR Model Developer, a simulation technology, can help make aircraft fleet operations, chemical production, and electricity generation processes more efficient, the firm said. The Formula Group is a major shareholder in the Clockwork Group, a privately held company.

**CommStock provides new service on the Net:** CommStock on the Net, a new, non-web-based service offered by CommStock Trading Ltd., provides anyone with a PC and a modem access to more than 256,000 real-time stocks, options, foreign exchanges, commodities, and indices. The information feed includes Standard & Poor's News, Platt's Commodity News, profiles of more than 7,000 companies, and Standard & Poor's Fundamental Data.

**Electronics '97 to be held March 25-27:** Electronics '97 will be held at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds from March 25-27, when some 150 local electronics companies are expected to display their goods. Onel Electronics, a Turkish company that manufactures parts for electronics companies, is also expected to attend the trade show.

**Magal to receive \$1.8m. order:** Magal Security Systems (Nasdaq: MAGSF) recently announced it will receive \$1.8m. to install and maintain the products Rapiscan Security Products Inc. is supplying to the Defense Ministry. Los Angeles-based Rapiscan received a \$12m. order for 16 pallet-screening machines, which are used to find explosives in cargo. Magal will be responsible for their upkeep. Based in Yehud, Magal develops computerized systems which automatically detect, locate, and identify the nature of an intrusion. The firm also manufactures systems that detect and locate explosive devices in luggage and packages.

**Magic Software signs \$1m. deal with Hughes Galaxy:** Magic Software Enterprises (Nasdaq: MGICF) recently announced the signing of a contract with Hughes Galaxy, one of the world's largest satellite and cable television providers. The contract has a total value of over \$1 million. This deal builds on a previous 1995 sale to the same provider for its network in South America. Magic Software Enterprises develops Magic, a table-driven rapid application development and deployment system for client/server and Internet-based systems.

**NetXchange to market messaging software:** NetXchange, a subsidiary of LanOptics Ltd. (Nasdaq: LNOFF), has announced that it will start marketing its messaging software technology through its new software developers kit. The kit enables hardware and software firms, as well as telecommunications service providers, to develop new Internet messaging products and services. Meanwhile, the company has announced that Castelle Corporation, a fax server company, will integrate NetXchange's protocol technology.

**Tecnomatix receives order from Subaru:** Tecnomatix Technologies Ltd. (Nasdaq: TCNOF) of Herzliya has received an order for its Robcad/spot software from Japanese car manufacturer Subaru. The company did not disclose the amount of the sale. Tecnomatix develops computer-aided production engineering (CAPE) software that allows production engineers to create a computer-based virtual manufacturing environment. The company's software is used in the automotive, aerospace, heavy industry, and electronics industries.

**Teledata wins Bezeq tender:** Teledata Communications Ltd. (Nasdaq: TLDCF) recently reported that it has signed an agreement to supply Bezeq with its Exchange Radio Concentrator. Under the terms of the agreement, Bezeq may purchase up to \$5 million worth of the ERC systems during this year. Based on advanced digital transmission technologies, the ERC system allows telecom operators to provide full telephone coverage. Based in Herzliya, Teledata designs products for the portion of the public network that links individual subscribers to a local exchange.

**US high-tech delegation to visit Israel:** Massachusetts Governor William Weld will lead a delegation of high-tech businessmen that will visit here from March 1 to 4. Delegates, including representatives of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, Mellen Medical Products, and Biogen, will visit various industrial parks, meet with Minister of Industry and Trade Nathan Sharansky, and attend a seminar on doing business in Israel.

## Gov't concerned over access to EU tenders

UK experts: EU barriers cost Israel 'hundreds of millions'

By DAVID HARRIS

The Treasury is increasingly concerned about local bidders' ongoing failure to win government tenders offered by European Union countries, and its large trade deficit with the EU as a whole, a senior Finance Ministry official said this week.

The bulk of Israel's total trade deficit has built up with the EU, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. Israel's entire 1996 trade deficit, excluding the diamond sector, totalled \$9.3 billion, and 72% or \$6.7b. of the overall figure was in trade with the EU.

The interim findings of an Israeli-commissioned report by

the UK-based Economist Advisory Group Ltd. (EAG) suggest Israel's full exporting potential to the EU is not being realized, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

During recent talks with EU Ambassador to Israel Jean Paul Jesse, outgoing Finance Ministry director-general David Brodet said that Israel is unhappy about its lack of market access and the proliferation of non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which obstruct the paths of Israeli exports to Europe.

Jesse suggested the establishment of a joint committee to examine this issue, later in the year. EAG was brought in by Israel to prepare the groundwork

for its arguments when the two sides eventually meet. It is anticipated the first meeting will take place in mid-1997.

The bulk of EAG's research is based on Israel's dealings with Britain, Germany and France, which account for upwards of 50% of all Israeli trade with the EU. During a visit to Israel, EAG staff were told by industrialists that the major problem seems to be the French market, and in particular the alleged protectionism that surrounds French government tenders.

The French reject this claim. "This is an unfair claim," said one government source. "The French market is perhaps the most open in the world, certainly

in Europe."

Currently exports and imports comprise some 25% of France's GNP (imports totalled \$251 billion in 1996), and imports more in dollar-terms from Israel than Germany. Israel ranked 36th last year.

"If public procurement is difficult in France, then it is in Israel, too," said the source.

"There is no problem competing, you just have to find the right price and the right partner."

During their stay, EAG representatives also met senior officials from the Finance Ministry, Industry and Trade Ministry, and Export Institute.

The final EAG report is expected to be completed in April.

## Mercantile reports NIS 40m. in bad debts

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Mercantile Discount Bank set aside additional allowances for doubtful debts of NIS 40 million in 1996 and fired one of its two deputy general managers, after unauthorized credit was discovered in its Nazareth branch, general manager Moshe Gavish said yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference to announce the bank's results for 1996, Gavish added that hardships in meeting the budget are causing government offices and local authorities to delay payments to suppliers and contractors, a phenomenon which may lead to the closure of many private businesses.

"They must not delay their payments. It is not ethical and will lead to the collapse of many businesses," Gavish warned.

Commenting on the macro-situation, the former income tax commissioner urged the government to cut the budget, to tax short-term capital transactions, and to devalue the shekel by 15 percent in several stages.

The bank's net profit for 1996 fell 36% to NIS 25.46m., compared to NIS 39.82m. The fourth-quarter net profit fell to NIS 336,000, compared with a NIS 4.72m. profit in the corresponding period last year. Net annual return on equity reached 5.4%.

The decrease in net earnings in 1996 was due primarily to an additional provision resulting from the extension of unauthorized credit to 10 accounts in the Nazareth branch. While Mercantile reached debt agreements with the customers concerned, the businesses failed to meet their obligations.

As a result, Albert Adas, the Mercantile deputy general manager who was in charge of the Nazareth branch, was forced to resign and the bank restructured its supervision division and other activities.

"In addition, we have split activities in the securities division, separated management of credit and branches, established another supervision division, and changed branch managers," Gavish said.

The drop in earnings also was due to losses of NIS 5.2m. from subsidiary Mercantile Israel Bank. The losses include a one-time expense of NIS 1.9m. resulting from the parent company's decision to merge the subsidiary's operations, in an attempt to reduce future expenses. Mercantile Israel, which has 60 workers, owns one branch in the center of Tel Aviv.

Profit from financing activities remained virtually unchanged, at NIS 337.5m. in 1996, compared to NIS 340.8m. in the previous year. Provisions for doubtful debts grew 11.1% to NIS 101.57m., compared to NIS 91.39m.

Operating income fell 1.8%, to NIS 150.84m., compared to NIS 153.59m., while operating expenses rose 3.1% to NIS 325.7m., compared to NIS 315.9m.

Total credit extended to the public amounted to NIS 5.66 billion, almost unchanged from the previous year. Deposits from the public reached NIS 7.5b.

In the reported period, Mercantile distributed dividends of NIS 20.2m. to its major shareholder Bank Discount. Gavish denied rumors that Bank Discount's issue was delayed because of Mercantile's fourth-quarter results.



F-4 Phantoms check in

Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Ismail Karadayi, accompanied by Israel Aircraft Industries director Moshe Keret, yesterday inspected one of the F-4 Phantoms that IAI is upgrading for Turkey.

## Networking business dramatically altered as 3Com buys US Robotics

By CLIFF EDWARDS

3Com Corp., a maker of computer networking products, is buying modem maker US Robotics for \$6.6 billion as the two seek to become a leader in the business of connecting computers.

The deal, announced Wednesday, combines two of the biggest players in the networking business, which has grown quickly and become a bigger part of computing with the growth of the Internet.

3Com's strength is working with large corporate customers, while US Robotics is best known as a consumer company that specializes in modems.

The combination, analysts said, should allow the new company to expand its customer reach in both areas. Additionally, the greater reach and product offerings are expected to let the new company, which will retain the 3Com name, be a stronger competitor in new Internet technologies.

The deal will create a high-tech company with \$5b. in annual revenue and more than 12,000

employees.

Company executives said it would be one of the two biggest competitors in every facet of the business.

Computer networking involves the linking of groups of machines, often within a single company, to allow employees to work together even if they are several hundred kilometers apart.

It is one of the fastest-growing areas in the computer business today and has seen very rapid consolidation amid fierce competition.

The combination of 3Com and US Robotics dramatically alters the networking landscape," said Eric Benhamou, 3Com's chairman and chief executive. Benhamou will keep the top job at the new company.

The Santa Clara, California-based 3Com will acquire US Robotics, of Skokie, Illinois with its own stock, giving Robotics shareholders 1.75 shares of 3Com for each share they hold. That works out to \$6.6 billion at Wednesday's close.

"This will make them a potent force in networking products and

data communications," said analyst John Grangaard at GS2 Securities in Milwaukee.

Casey Cowell, chairman and chief executive of US Robotics, said the combination will allow the new company to sell its products to a variety of customers including big and small corporations, telephone carriers, network and Internet service providers, and consumers.

Cowell will join 3Com's board as vice chairman but will have no say in the day-to-day operations of the new company. The deal is expected to close by early summer.

The news was announced after markets closed Wednesday. 3Com shares closed at \$39, down 1 1/2 cents on the Nasdaq Stock Exchange. US Robotics was off 50 cents at \$61 in Nasdaq trading.

3Com shares have fallen by almost 50 percent in the past month amid concerns about general weakness in the networking sector that have also weighed on US Robotics' stock.

The companies began considering the deal in the past two months, Benhamou said.

America Online this week

announced it planned to go with U.S. Robotics technology for a recently released modem, the x2, that allows users to download information at nearly double the speed of other modems.

The deal also is likely to lead to a protracted battle with Motorola Corp., which next week hopes to unveil its own product.

The company has sued US Robotics, accusing the company of using Motorola technology in its modems.

(Reuters)

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### CORRECTION

The photograph of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the cover of this week's *Money* magazine was taken by The Associated Press, and not as credited.

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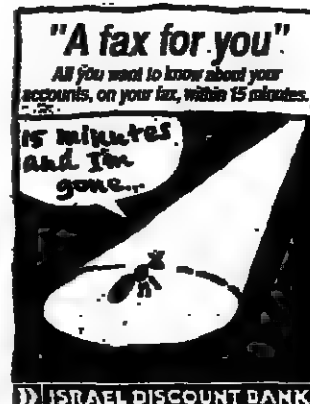
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March 14 - 14.00 - 16.00  
Tel Aviv, U.S. Embassy, 71 Hayarkon St.  
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# ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS

Patash (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.825	1.825	2.125	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.825	0.750	1.000	
Yen (10 million yen)				

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (27.2.97)					
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep.	
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Rates**	
Currency basket	3.8514	3.8585	3.25	3.42	3.424
U.S. dollar	3.3113	3.3848	1.92	2.02	1.9818
German mark	1.9684	1.9911	0.57	0.58	0.5805
Pound sterling	5.3878	5.4748	2.58	2.82	2.7881
French franc	0.8810	0.8904	1.71	1.80	1.7830
Japanese yen (100)	2.7348	2.7790	0.48	0.51	0.4889
Dutch florin	1.7430	1.7712	1.71	1.80	1.7830
Swiss franc	2.2387	2.2759	2.20	2.31	2.2969
Swedish krona	0.4420	0.4492	0.43	0.46	0.4472
Norwegian krona	0.4929	0.5009	0.48	0.51	0.4889
Danish krone	0.5138	0.5219	0.50	0.53	0.5186
Finnish mark	0.8578	0.8678	0.84	0.86	0.8684
Canadian dollar	2.4219	2.4610	2.38	2.50	2.4480
Australian dollar	2.5711	2.6125	2.52	2.65	2.5852
S. African rand	0.7422	0.7542	0.67	0.78	0.7502
Belgian franc (10)	0.8496	0.8650	0.83	0.98	0.9808
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7838	2.8295	2.73	2.97	2.8158
Italian lire (1000)	1.9881	1.9959	1.93	2.03	1.9940
Jordanian dinar	4.8100	4.8200	4.81	4.82	4.7709
Egyptian pound	0.9400	1.0300	0.94	1.03	1.0211
ECU	3.8072	3.8887	5.13	5.39	3.8517
Irish punt	5.2248	5.3022	5.13	5.39	5.2882
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3109	2.3482	2.27	2.39	2.3982

\*These rates vary according to bank. \*\*Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI







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**Hadassah Medical Organization - Israel Cancer Association telephone support service** 02-624-7676.

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## NEWS

in brief

## Amir's mother protests at US Embassy

Goula Amir, the mother of Yigal Amir, prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassin, held a vigil yesterday outside the US Embassy in Tel Aviv, to protest the US refusal to grant her an entry visa. A counter-protest attended by a handful of people took place nearby.

"There is no reason I shouldn't get a visa," Amir said. "I don't have a criminal record and I wanted to know who is responsible for the refusal to give me a visa."

Amir, who stood with several supporters, said she does not plan to go to the US to raise money, but if anyone wants to contribute, "it would be good."

## Lod man sentenced to life for murder

Tel Aviv District Court yesterday sentenced Uriel Daniels, of Lod, to life imprisonment for murdering money changer Yitzhak Miklashvili in June 1995.

Daniels, who had fallen into debt, was found guilty of murdering Miklashvili and stealing some \$40,000 in cash from him.

## Girl killed when wall collapses

Juma'a Badir, 9, of Kafr Kassem, was killed yesterday afternoon when a stone wall in her backyard collapsed on her.

An MDA crew declared her dead at the scene. Police said there was no foul play involved, and that the wall, which was erected recently, was not reinforced properly.

## Two people injured in truck-car crash

Two people were hurt, one seriously, when their car was struck by a truck yesterday in Bnei Brak. An initial investigation showed the truck crossed the dividing line and hit two cars traveling in the opposite direction. The driver was detained for questioning.

## Lawyer to publish book the Bar tried to bar

A book whose publication was prevented by the Israel Bar Association, on the grounds that its author was trying to publicize himself, is to go on sale shortly. Ironically, its author achieved what he was supposed to avoid — publicity.

Lawyer Oded Ben-Ami petitioned the High Court of Justice Wednesday after the bar's ethical committee refused to allow him to sell the book, *Behind the Lawyer's Cloak*, in which he describes the life of a lawyer in Israel today.

The book was written with the express purpose of gaining publicity for its author and this is ethically unacceptable, as lawyers cannot advertise themselves, bar representative Moshe Elias told the court.

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Readers: If there are any topics you'd like us to cover, please fax us your suggestions.

## Hizbullah gunman killed in zone

By DAVID RUDGE

Another Hizbullah gunman was killed in fighting in South Lebanon last night, bringing to three the number killed by IDF and SLA troops in the past few days, the IDF reported last night.

The gunman was killed during exchanges near Dabshe in the Beaufort Castle region in security zone's eastern sector.

Two other Hizbullah gunmen were killed, and another two reported wounded by IDF and SLA troops in the Beit Yahoun area in the western sector on Wednesday.

There were no reports of any casualties to IDF or South Lebanese Army troops.

Earlier yesterday afternoon, gunmen

opened fire on IDF troops while they were on operational duties in the eastern sector. There were no casualties and IDF gunners returned fire.

The IDF Spokesman noted that the mortar fire originated from the outskirts of Majdal Salim village, north of the zone, thereby endangering civilian lives and property from return fire.

The spokesman stressed that the terrorists continue to use populated areas as cover for firing at IDF troops.

There were reports of more fighting later, in the evening, in the Beaufort Castle area, also in the eastern sector.

Hizbullah deputy leader Sheikh Naim Kassem became the latest official of the

organization to warn of retaliatory attacks in the event of Lebanese civilians being harmed by IDF or SLA activities.

"Civilians in northern Israel will one day be rocketed by Katyushas irrespective of the April [Grapes of Wrath] understandings, if Israeli violations of the understandings persist," Kassem was quoted as saying in Lebanese newspapers yesterday.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian terrorist captured by IDF troops during a clash inside the security zone 10 years ago was yesterday released from jail and deported to Syria, after serving two thirds of his sentence.

He was handed over to representatives of the international Red Cross at the Kuneitra

border post on the Golan Heights at midday and crossed over into Syrian territory.

Terrorist Bassem Ghalem was the sole survivor of the squad of Palestinian terrorists in the clash with IDF troops. He said they had been en route to carry out an attack in Nabariya and take hostages to bargain for the release of comrades jailed in Israel.

He petitioned the Haifa District Court to be released after serving two thirds of his sentence. The court ruled he should be freed on condition that he would be expelled from the country.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak recently signed the necessary deportation papers.

## Syria: No peace talks if Israel starts from beginning

By ELAD BECK

PARIS — Syrian Vice President Abdel-Halim Haddam declared yesterday that if peace talks between Israel and Syria are to be resumed from "point zero," as claimed by the Israeli government, there will be no peace in the region for dozens of years.

Speaking to journalists in Paris, after meeting with President Jacques Chirac, Haddam stressed there will be no negotiations if Israel insists on going back to the beginning, and ignoring the understandings reached with the previous Labor-led government.

"If every time a political change takes place in a [Middle Eastern] country, the negotiations will have to start from the starting point, that will lead us nowhere," Haddam said. The Syrian vice-president and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara delivered Chirac a message from President Hafez Assad concerning the state of the Mideast peace process.

The Syrian officials arrived here a few days before French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette is due to travel to Israel, Syria, and Lebanon.

Although the Syrians said their mission was meant to urge the French and the Europeans to intervene to save the peace process, which Shara said is facing "great dangers," observers here estimated that the Syrian envoys presented new propositions that might help renew the peace talks.

The French and Syrians did not confirm that Haddam and Shara, who also met with de Charette, asked him to convey any specific message to Israel next week. However, Haddam said France knows what it has to do to promote the peace process.

According to French sources, during the meeting between Chirac and the Syrian officials, Haddam

presented Syria's "critical" evaluation of the situation in the Middle East, saying the recent Israeli initiatives were complicating the situation, and that doubts are growing on the Arab side as to the Netanyahu government's willingness to continue the peace process.

Haddam emphasized that it is inconceivable to envisage a separate solution for South Lebanon and to the Golan Heights. Shara criticized what he called "the laziness" of the peace process's co-sponsors, the US and Russia, saying that a French and European role in the peace process is necessary.

De Charette said after his talks that he is not very optimistic about the future of the peace process, in light of the numerous obstacles. He added that during his Middle East trip next week he will do his utmost to help the parties concerned overcome these obstacles.

Chirac expressed his concern over the global situation in the Middle East, and stressed that the peace process is very fragile. Chirac said France would encourage those who try to renew the peace efforts, and will supply help if all the parties wish it to do so.

France considers the Israeli decision to build in Har Homa to be one of the recent obstacles to advancing peace. Yesterday France said the decision contradicts the content and spirit of the peace process and harms the status quo in Jerusalem, and that it profoundly regrets the Israeli decision.

However, the French Foreign Ministry spokesman made it clear this decision will not bring France to suspend the approval of the Israel-EU association accord in the French parliament. The vote on the agreement, due yesterday, was delayed because of technical reasons connected to the length of the parliamentary debate on a new immigration law, he said.



## Shelter from the storm

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu enjoys a respite yesterday from the Bar-On and Har Homa affairs, as he meets with a group of Likud mayors who gathered to show their support for him at Metzudat Ze'ev in Tel Aviv. "I know you've come to give me strength, but I will strengthen you," he said, adding he is proud of the decision to build at Har Homa. (Israel Hader)

## GRAY AREA

Continued from Page 9

Segal notes a comment by Justice Aharon Barak on the obligation resting on those authorized to appoint a civil servant. They must choose civil servants "worthy of their positions, fitted to carry out a public mission, people of integrity, who will act in a healthy atmosphere with a sense of responsibility for the integrity of the service."

Responsibility for the integrity of the Civil Service guides the State Prosecutor's office and police. These bodies, whose independence is part of the rule of law and the system of checks and balances, must be governed by relevant facts only and eschew all ulterior political considerations.

There is only one basis for deciding if charges must be pressed in a case such as this, Segal said. "That is whether 'sufficient evidence' exists or does not exist that criminal acts have been committed." Segal pointed out, however, that senior officials might avoid the black area of legal responsibility, but still end up in the gray one of ethics and public morality.

"There, they still have to face judgment in the court of public opinion."

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## QUIET

Continued from Page 7

The vacuum will be filled."

GANOR, who served as consultant to several governments on terror and advised Netanyahu as opposition leader, says the policies of the current government do not deter Arafat from renewing his option of violence. Stressing that his opinions do not reflect that of his center, he again refers to the September shootings and the immediate US-sponsored negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis that followed.

"The Netanyahu government should have said there is a political price for terrorism," Ganor, whose center's board includes former Mossad chief Shabtai Shavit and David Kimche, says.

"There should be a clear price for suicide attacks: three months' delay after every attack. At the same time, when the PA prevents terror, we should make a gesture. I recommended that Bibi give a date for the final status talks."

"Bibi didn't do this until events in September. Until September, it would have been a goodwill gesture to help the process; after September it was seen as a result of pressure."

The September shootings confirmed another assessment held by Israeli security officials: Arafat is in full control in the territories. They acknowledge that he probably did not order Palestinian police officers to shoot at IDF soldiers. But once they did, the PA chief directed the battles and only ended the violence when he felt he had made his point.

Moreover, Arafat did not yield to the appeals of Hamas and Islamic Jihad to renew terrorist attacks against Israel. The Islamic leaders in the territories, both Palestinian and Israeli security sources say, have accepted Arafat's argument that diplomatic pressure rather than terrorism works better in ensuring Israeli withdrawal.

The terror option should be reserved for the future.

"This is the quiet before the storm," Ganor says, using language nearly identical to that of senior security sources who specialize in counterterrorism. "I feel that we are living on dynamite. Yasser Arafat didn't do anything significant against terrorist organizations, such as imposing a ban on weapons or collecting weapons or really punishing terrorists. Arafat decided to fight terror through consensus."

Israeli officials acknowledge that the key to maintaining the current calm is based on two factors. Firstly, the Netanyahu government must not expand Israeli presence in the territories or in Jerusalem.

The second is that Israel must not attack Islamic terrorist groups.

"This, they say, is the reason why Israel has not followed through on its year-old request for the extradition to Israel of Hamas leader Moussa Abu Marzouk."

"The question is are we ready to die for Jerusalem," a security source says. "The Palestinians are ready to die for what they believe in."

Moreover, Israeli intelligence in the territories remains poor.

The result is that Israeli officials and security sources say the initiative rests with the Palestinians. And they are convinced that a shooting war with Arafat is inevitable.

The only question is what will be the spark. Some sources preferred that the decision to build Har Homa be taken immediately, precisely because Arafat would realize that this time a violent Palestinian response would delay the scheduled first further redeployment and a resumption of final-status negotiations.

This, Ganor says, is the best Israeli deterrence for a government intent on continuing the Oslo accords.







## Hoter-Yishai snubs Hanegbi on request for apology

### BAR-ON

By BAT SHEVA TSUR and Itim

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi has asked Israel Bar Association chairman Dror Hoter-Yishai several times to apologize for his personal attacks on Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, but Hoter-Yishai has not complied, Hanegbi said yesterday.

"I personally have something to say about the intervention of the Supreme Court, but I will not comment on it now, as the matter is under investigation," Hanegbi told reporters, during a tour of court facilities in Beersheba.

He was referring to the discussion held between Barak and Hanegbi before Roni Bar-On was appointed attorney-general last month. Barak is said to have strongly opposed the appointment.

Hoter-Yishai this week slammed Barak for discussing the appointment at all, saying that his behavior violated the norm of separation of powers between the judiciary and the executive branch.

"I have several times asked attorney Hoter-Yishai to tone down his remarks," Hanegbi said yesterday. "I have asked him to apologize for his words of personal criticism [against Barak]. Were he to do this, we would be able to relate to the matters of principle behind the arguments, which are certainly worth discussing. But because of the personal tone [adopted by Hoter-Yishai] we are not able to discuss the really important issues."

Meanwhile, Hoter-Yishai reportedly approached Haifa District Court Judge Michael Lindenstrauss and asked him to put his name forward as attorney-general after Bar-On's resignation. Information to this effect was passed on to the police by one of those questioned in the investigation into the Bar-On affair, Yehonatan Aharonovitch reported yesterday. At the time, Hoter-Yishai was being investigated on suspicion of tax evasion, for which he has since been indicted.

Lindenstrauss discussed the issue with Barak, the paper said, then returned to Hoter-Yishai and told him he was not interested. The judge confirmed that he had been approached by Hoter-Yishai.



Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai (right) hosts his Canadian counterpart, Douglas Young (left), at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv yesterday.

## Canadian defense minister arrives

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Canadian Defense Minister Douglas Young is to tour the Golan Heights today, meet with Canadian UN troops deployed in the buffer zone between Israel and Syria and get a first-hand look at the strategic plateau.

Young, who is paying an unofficial visit to

Israel following his sweep through the Gulf States, met yesterday with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who briefed him on Israel's security concerns.

"Our national memory is filled with difficult and traumatic events," Mordechai told Young. "The State of Israel and its government welcome the strategic peace we have with Egypt and

Jordan. We are working to advance the peace process with the Palestinians and are also looking for ways to renew the negotiations with Syria and Lebanon. In all of our negotiations we must ensure that our national security is not harmed."

Both Mordechai and Young agreed to work at upgrading military trade, which is presently very low.

## Teacher remanded in rape of pupil, 14

By ESTHER HECHT, ARIEH DEAN COHEN and Itim

Serge Ben-Hamu, 39, a Jerusalem teacher who is suspected of having raped and impregnated one of his young ballet students, was remanded yesterday for one week by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court.

The police representative told the court the suspect taught ballet to 12-14 year olds, and would make sexual overtures to his pupils. In this case, the girl, who Israel Radio reported is 14, claimed the teacher had raped her several months ago, after covering her mouth and saying if she screamed, he would kill her. The girl is now eight months pregnant. But before the court hearing, Ben-Hamu told reporters that he had been having relations with the

girl for some two years. He said they both hoped to marry, and that he had no idea she was pregnant until he was arrested.

Asked if he had impregnated her, the suspect replied that, while he had had relations with her, he had never raped her or threatened to kill her.

During the court hearing, it emerged that the girl, the daughter of a police officer, had five months ago told her mother that she had missed her period. Her mother took her to the doctor, who reassured them that periods in girls of her age are often irregular. After several doctor visits, the girl was prescribed birth control pills to regulate her period. Last week, however, the girl underwent an ultrasound examination and was found to be eight months pregnant.

The magistrate's court judge said that one cannot dismiss the possibility that in such cases the girl might not be telling the truth, in order to take revenge on someone or cover up an unwanted pregnancy.

However, even if the intercourse was taking place with the girl's consent, it is still statutory rape, which carries a maximum sentence of 16 years' imprisonment.

According to a Jerusalem municipal spokesman, the teacher was fired from a local school two years ago, after the principal of the school heard rumors he had been initiating relationships with female pupils. The principal called the parents to a meeting and warned them about him.

Education Ministry Director-General Ben-Zion Dell expressed his revulsion at the report, saying,

"The Hebrew dictionary lacks the proper words to describe the scope of this crime."

Dell told Israel Radio he understood Ben-Hamu had not worked in the school system for two years.

Ministry deputy spokesman Tova Azulai said psychologists and other experts had been sent to the school to help the principal and staff handle the situation. Azulai said the girl involved "needs help," but that she would only be able to receive such assistance with her parents' consent.

She said that if Ben-Hamu's description of their relationship is accurate, then it was "highly irregular." She added there had been a previous incident in which a teacher got one his pupils pregnant, and that after the completion of legal proceedings, the teacher was dismissed.

## How could a parent not notice an 8-month pregnancy?

By ESTHER HECHT

It is possible for a girl to be eight months pregnant without her parents knowing about it, an expert on children's rights said yesterday. "I don't know about this particular case, but a young girl's menstrual periods are often irregular, and so missed periods might not be a clear warning signal," said Dr. Yitzhak Kadman, head of the Jerusalem-based National Council for the Child.

Another reason parents might be unaware of a girl's condition is a communications breakdown between them, something Kadman said he sees more and more these days.

In some cases, a girl's denial of her pregnancy - because of the overwhelming emotional distress - will make her condition virtually invisible, said Joanne Zack-Pakes, head of Shilo, a family planning, educational, and counseling center in Jerusalem.

"I saw a tall, skinny 16-year-old in her 21st week, and nothing showed," she said. "It's a known phenomenon that the stomach pops out [only] when she admits she's pregnant."

Nevertheless, Zack-Pakes finds it hard to accept that a parent could not know his or her daughter was pregnant.

"You see your child day in and day out. You know every part of their body," she said. Whether or not the suspected

father of the baby is the girl's teacher, his actions have grave legal consequences, in addition to the ethical and educational ones. Kadman said. Legally, sexual relations with a girl under 14 years of age are statutory rape, even if the girl consents, because her consent is considered meaningless.

If the man is her teacher, even if the girl is over 14, sexual relations between them may be tantamount

to rape, if the man is seen as having taken advantage of his position of authority.

Not only must the police and the courts give a clear message that such offenses are not to be taken lightly, but the Education Ministry must make sure the man is kept away from children, Kadman said.

"He doesn't belong in any educational system," Kadman stated.

## Hanegbi to demand extradition of 33 Palestinian suspects

By BAT SHEVA TSUR and JON IMMANUEL

The joint Israel-Palestinian Authority legal committee is to convene, for the first time in 10 months, at the Erez checkpoint on March 16. An agreement to this effect was worked out last night at a meeting in Tel Aviv between Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Medein. Hanegbi plans to bring a list of 33 persons suspected of murder, participation in suicide bombings, and lesser crimes to the meeting. He will demand that they be transferred from the areas

under the control of the PA so that they can stand trial in Israel.

Among the wanted are the three terrorists suspected of murdering Eyal Tsor and her son, Efraim, at Beit El last December 11. They were identified as Ibrahim Masoud Hanni, Ibrahim Tsalah Alkum, and Abdel Nasser Kaisi.

Also wanted by Israel, for collaborating in suicide bombings in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Ashkelon

are Bassem Tsubhi Issa, Hashem Ashur Dib, and Nafaz Mahmoud Sabi'ah.

Israel will likewise ask for the transfer of Am'ad Mahmoud Abbas, for the murder of Moshe Bino and Amikam Zaltsman at the Karni packing house, and Atef Hamdan, for attempting to murder a soldier. Israel is also asking for Abdalla Samiri, for the murder of Naftali Sahar from Rehovot.

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## Bank workers strike today

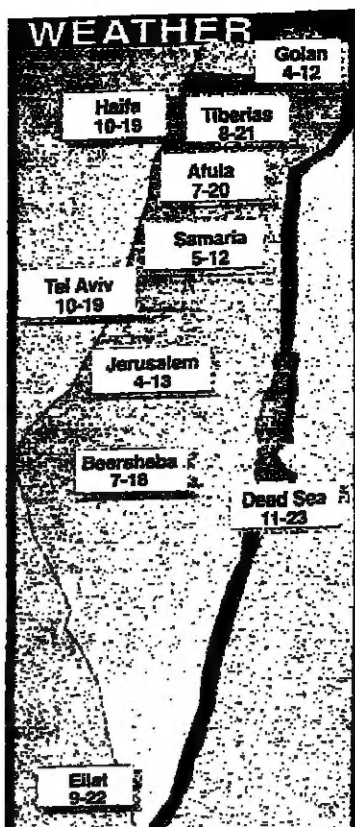
By GALIT LIPKIS BECK and Itim

Bank workers intend to strike today, for the third Friday in a row, even if the National Labor Court issues an injunction against a strike. The planned labor action is part of the workers' struggle for a five-day workweek in the banking sector. Throughout the week, there was no progress in talks between management and workers over the shorter workweek.

The small banks and the Postal Authority said their branches will be open as usual today.

The entire banking system was on strike last Friday, breaching a National Labor Court injunction limiting the strike to no more than half the working hours on any day.

In response, Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein yesterday called on the court to fine the heads of the bank workers' unions for contempt of court.



Forecast: Partly cloudy, slight rise in temperatures.  
Shabbat: Partly cloudy to clear, additional rise in temperatures.

### AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH	
Amsterdam	02	36	cloudy
Berlin	02	32	cloudy
Buenos Aires	22	27	clear
Cairo	18	21	clear
Chicago	01	24	clear
Copenhagen	01	24	clear
Frankfurt	01	24	cloudy
Geneva	04	29	cloudy
Helsinki	00	32	cloudy
Hong Kong	18	24	clear
Jakarta	14	27	cloudy
London	10	20	clear
Los Angeles	07	46	clear
Madrid	01	18	cloudy
Moscow	02	26	cloudy
New York	02	26	cloudy
Paris	02	26	cloudy
Rome	01	11	cloudy
Sydney	20	28	cloudy
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Zurich	02	26	cloudy

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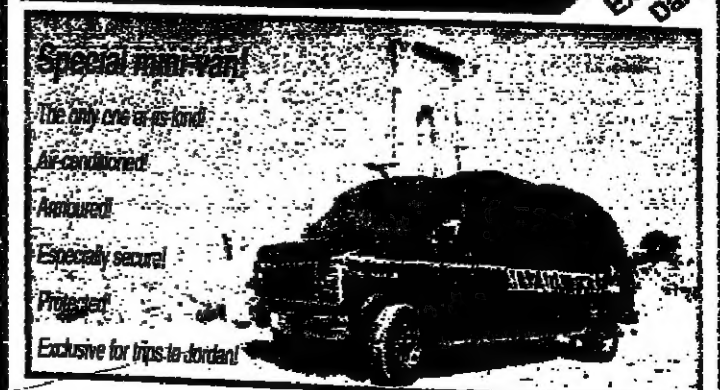
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